

Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

# HARRISON'S REPORTS

**Yearly Subscription Rates:**

United States .....	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions ..	16.50
Canada .....	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain .....	15.75
Australia, New Zealand,	
India, Europe, Asia ....	17.50
35c a Copy	

**1270 SIXTH AVENUE****Room 1812****New York 20, N. Y.**A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the ExhibitorsIts Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING****Vol. XXVII****SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 1945****No. 1**

## The Implications of the U. S. Supreme Court Decision in the Crescent Case

*(Concluded from last week)*

Ever since the producers began to acquire theatres, creating large circuits of them, the heads of their theatre departments have felt that, since exhibition was not interstate commerce, they could employ any tactics in monopolizing the product and that they were not, therefore, violating any law. For instance, they would call up a film company and order it to withhold product from a competitor who had been getting that product for years, giving as their reason the fact that they would soon build a theatre in that town. They would enter into long-term franchises; would obtain selective contracts and never release the "unselected" films; would buy the building where their competitor had his theatre and, when the lease expired, would refuse to renew the lease so that they could operate the theatre themselves; would buy a vacant lot in a town and announce that such-and-such a circuit would build on that lot a modern theatre, thus frightening the existing exhibitor into selling his theatre to them, at times for a "song"; would impose upon their competitors clearance as to time and area altogether out of reason, with a view to harming the receipts of these competitors—they would commit these and many more abuses, on the theory that they were doing legitimate business.

Independent theatre circuits, too, copied their methods until no small exhibitor was sure whether or not he would have product for the following season. And the small exhibitor knew that, without product, his doom was sealed.

The small independent producers and those of the film companies that operated no theatres were compelled to sell their product to the affiliated circuits, or to the larger independent circuits, under a threat of boycott. Those of the distributors that owned theatres, however, gladly cooperated with one another; they believed that, being the owners of the films and of the copyrights, they could either sell their product to an exhibitor or withhold it from him, depending at times on their own good judgment, at other times on their whims, and at still other on the amount of pressure applied by interested circuits.

Most exhibitor circuit heads were, I am sure, honest in their belief that they were within their rights in imposing upon the distributors their terms with respect, not only to their own theatres, but also to the theatres of their competitors. As an example, let us take the case of Bob O'Donnell, of Interstate Circuit, Texas. On July 11, 1934, Mr. O'Donnell wrote to the branch managers of Paramount, Warner Bros.,

RKO, and to the branch managers of other distributors the following letter, which was produced as evidence in the Interstate Case:

"On April 25th, the writer notified you that in purchasing product for the coming season 34-35, it would be necessary for all distributors to take into consideration in the sale of subsequent runs that Interstate Circuit, Inc., will not agree to purchase product to be exhibited in its "A" theatres at a price of 40c or more for night admission, unless distributors agree that this "A" product will never be exhibited at any time or in any theatre at a smaller admission price than 25c for adults in the evening.

"In addition to this price restriction, we also request that on "A" pictures which are exhibited at a night admission price of 40c or more—they shall never be exhibited in conjunction with another feature picture under the so-called policy of double-features. . .

"In the event that a distributor sees fit to sell his product to subsequent runs in violation of this request, it definitely means that we cannot negotiate for his product to be exhibited in our "A" theatres at top admission prices. . ."

Now, who can question Bob O'Donnell's honesty? Not this writer, nor anyone else who knows Mr. O'Donnell. In writing this letter he had a constructive viewpoint—to uphold prices so that the producer might get a greater gross, enabling him to make bigger and better pictures, and to put an end to double features, at least on top features. And the distributors, feeling that as owners of the copyrighted films they could dispose of them in any way they saw fit, acceded to Mr. O'Donnell's demands. Nevertheless, his action was in violation of the law, for to accomplish his purpose, he compelled the distributors to impose his will upon competing exhibitors, with the resultant tendency to suppress normal competition.

Long before the Interstate Case, where Bob O'Donnell's letter was criticized by the courts, Justice Reynolds, speaking for the U. S. Supreme Court in the famous Arbitration case, said:

"It may be that arbitration is well adapted to the needs of the motion picture industry; but when under the guise of arbitration parties enter into unusual arrangements which unreasonably suppress normal competition their action becomes illegal.

"In order to establish violation of the Sherman Act it is not necessary to show that the challenged

*(Continued on last page)*

**"Under Western Skies" with  
Noah Beery, Jr. and Martha O'Driscoll**  
(Universal, January 19; time, 57 min.)

Just a mediocre comedy with music, strictly for the lower-half of a mid-week double bill. The story is extremely weak, tiring one. It seems a pity to waste the talents of the players in anything so silly as this, for, in spite of their efforts, they are so handicapped by the poor material that they fail to make an impression. One or two spots provoke laughter; but for the most part the antics of the characters are far from amusing. The best thing that can be said for it is that it has a few pleasing songs sung by Martha O'Driscoll:—

Traveling east by stagecoach, Leon Errol's variety show is waylaid by Leo Carrillo and his desperadoes as they approach Rim Rock, Arizona. Carrillo demands a performance on the spot, but Martha O'Driscoll, Errol's daughter, refuses. Admiring her spunk, Carrillo permits the troupe to continue on its way. At Rim Rock, the troupe encounters considerable opposition from the town's civic leaders, who refuse to let them appear in the Town Hall. Martha, determined to prove that showfolk were decent people, arranges for a performance in the Silver Dollar saloon. Meanwhile, she becomes interested in Noah Beery, Jr., the town school teacher. That night, the show is interrupted by the sudden appearance of Carrillo's gang, and the performance turns into a free-for-all brawl. On Sunday, Martha persuades the troupe to attend church. The services are interrupted by two of Carrillo's henchmen who kidnap Martha and take her to the outlaw's hideout in the hills. Carrillo informs Martha that he merely wanted to say goodbye, having decided to reform his ways. Carrillo's men, shocked by this decision, turn on him. He starts shooting it out with the gang just as Beery arrives to rescue Martha. Between them, Beery and Carrillo wipe out the outlaws. Carrillo clears out, leaving Beery with seven bodies to dispose of. Appalled by the thought of the townspeople's reaction to his deed, Beery persuades Sheriff Irving Bacon, who was about to lose his badge because he could not shoot straight, to take credit for wiping out the gang. It all ends with Bacon being reinstated to office with honor, and with Beery and Martha getting married.

Stanley Roberts and Clyde Bruckman wrote the screen play, Warren Wilson produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it. The cast includes Ian Keith, Jennifer Holt and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"They Shall Have Faith" with  
Gale Storm and John Mack Brown**  
(Monogram, January 26; time, 83 min.)

This well-made drama has the ingredients for mass appeal in that it has deep human interest, amusing comedy, and good performances. In addition, it has some outstanding musical interludes. Except for the subject matter—infantile paralysis, neither the story nor its treatment is particularly novel, but it holds one's interest well because of the sympathy one feels for the characters. Gale Storm, as the fun-loving but charitable young socialite who is stricken by the disease, gives a very competent performance, making the most of her opportunities to display her talents

both dramatically and musically. A light touch is provided by Frank Craven, as Gale's inebriated but understanding uncle, by Mary Boland, as his watchful wife, and by C. Aubrey Smith, as Gale's grumpy but loveable grandfather. The production values are very good:—

Gale, popular young daughter of Conrad Nagel, a prominent physician, busies herself daily doing kindly deeds for hospitalized children and wounded servicemen. When John Mack Brown, her father's former pupil and a major in the Army, visits her home to discuss with Nagel a new treatment for infantile paralysis, Gale finds herself attracted to the young doctor, in spite of the fact that she planned to marry Johnny Downs, her childhood sweetheart. Nagel arranges for Brown to continue his experiments in a local hospital. One night, when Gale and Johnny appear at a war bond show in a specialty dance act, Gale collapses on the dance floor and is taken home to bed. An examination discloses that she had been stricken with infantile paralysis. When her father and grandfather, himself a famed doctor, fail to help her by the use of splints and braces, Gale loses hope of ever becoming well again. Downs and Frank Craven, her uncle, appeal to Brown to take charge of the case and to apply his new treatment. Brown, eager to be of service, finds himself opposed by Gale's grandfather, who felt that the young doctor's new technique had not yet been proved. When Gale learns of the situation, she gives Brown her own permission to experiment on her. The operation is a complete success, and Gale regains the use of her limbs. As Brown prepares to leave on another assignment, he and Gale declare their love for each other.

William Nigh and George Sayre wrote the screen play, Jeffrey Bernard produced it, and Mr. Nigh directed it. The cast includes Leo Diamond and His Harmonaires, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Castle of Crimes" with Keneth Kent  
and Diana Churchill**

(PRC, December 22; time, 60 min.)

This British-made murder-mystery melodrama is moderately entertaining program fare. While there is nothing exceptional about the story or its treatment, it holds one's interest to a fair degree, offering a number of thrills. Mystery picture fans should find it adequately mystifying, despite its tendency to lag in certain situations. Not much can be said for the performances; there is too much posturing on the part of the players. The production tone is good:—

When Louise Hampton, a wealthy widow, dies mysteriously at her French villa, Keneth Kent, a famous but egotistical French detective, is assigned to solve the murder. Kent learns that the widow had been murdered with a deadly poison, and among the suspects he finds Diana Churchill, the dead woman's niece, who appeared quite anxious to collect her legacy; Belle Chrystall, Diana's secretary-companion, who had been discharged by the widow on the night before her death; and an anonymous letter-writer who had been trying to blackmail the widow for indiscretions she had committed as a young woman. Deciding that the murderer and the letter-writer were the same person, Kent, aided by Peter Murray-Hill, a young



attorney who was in love with Belle, methodically goes about gathering clues until he becomes convinced that Diana had committed the murder out of fear that her aunt would cut her off from her will. To prove Diana's guilt and to get her to confess, Kent deliberately builds up a case against Belle to make it appear as if he suspected her. Diana, misled by Kent's motives, tries to further the hypothetical case against Belle, but she succeeds only in setting a trap for herself. Desperate, she makes an attempt on Belle's life, but Kent's timely interference prevents her from committing a second murder.

Doreen Montgomery wrote the screen play, A. E. W. Mason produced it, and Harold French directed it. The cast includes Clifford Evans, Catherine Lacey and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Rogues Gallery" with Robin Raymond and Frank Jenks**

(PRC, December 6; time, 58 min.)

A mildly entertaining program murder mystery melodrama with comedy situations, parts of which are pretty silly. Since the comedy is stressed, the spectator finds it difficult to take the melodramatic angle seriously. Moreover, the outcome is obvious and, although the murderer is not identified until the finish, it is simple for one to guess his identity long before then. Robin Raymond, as the quick-witted girl-reporter, is a pert type, but she overacts her part. The story is far-fetched, and it unfolds in an unbelievable way:—

Sent to the Emerson Foundation to interview H. B. Warner, inventor of a revolutionary listening device, Robin Raymond, a reporter for the Daily Express, and Frank Jenks, a news photographer, arrive just as a mysterious intruder attacks the inventor and steals the invention's blueprints. Robin recovers the blueprints in a scuffle with the intruder, who escapes. She uses the prints to obtain an exclusive story about the invention from Davison Clark, head of the Foundation, and his committeemen. As Jenks prepares to take a group picture, Ray Walker, a rival reporter and nephew of Clark's arrives on the scene. Just then, the lights go out mysteriously, a shot is fired, and one of the committeemen is found dead. Police Capt. Robert Homans hurries to the house only to find that the murdered man's body had disappeared; he accuses Robin and Jenks of trickery for the purpose of printing a sensational story. Later, Robin and Jenks find the missing body in their car only to have it disappear again when they take it to the police. Discharged by their editor for using a murder story that could not be proved, Robin and Jenks start on an investigation of their own. They return to Warner's laboratory, where the scientist demonstrates his invention—a device capable of picking up conversations without a radio hook-up. During the demonstration, they tune in on Clark's home and hear a stranger threatening him. They rush to the house and arrive in time to save Clark. After a series of incidents in which Warner is murdered and the blueprints disappear, Robin and Jenks, through a recording made with the invention, uncover Walker, the rival reporter, as the criminal.

John T. Neville wrote the screen play, Donald C. McKean and Albert Herman produced it, and Mr. Herman directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"This Man's Navy" with Wallace Beery, Tom Drake and James Gleason**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 100 min.)

This service comedy-melodrama offers plentiful human appeal, but it is somewhat over-sentimental and its running time is much too long for the story it has to tell. It should, however, please the Wallace Beery fans, as well as the action fans who are not too exacting in their demands, for it has a number of exciting sequences of the type to hold one in suspense. The Navy's lighter-than-air branch serves as the background for the story and, since the Navy cooperated in the production, some of the action seems realistic. Considerable laughter is provoked by the friendly feud between Beery and James Gleason, both Naval veterans, as a result of Beery's trying to pass off a young farm boy as his son in order to match Gleason's bragging about his own son. A thrilling sequence is the one in which Beery pilots a blimp through territory infested with Jap planes so that he could rescue his pseudo-son, who had been shot down in the Burma jungle. The romantic interest is pleasant but unimportant:—

Not to be outdone by Chief Machinist's Mate James Gleason, who bragged about his son's exploits, Wallace Beery, Chief Aviation Pilot at the Lakehurst Blimp Station, invents a son for himself and tells Gleason tall tales about the boy. A few days later, Beery meets Tom Drake, who lived with his widowed mother (Selena Royle) on a farm nearby. He encourages the boy to join the lighter-than-air service only to discover that he was a cripple. Beery arranges for a successful operation on Tom's leg, enabling him to join the service. Grateful, Tom allows Beery to pretend that he was his father. Beery drives the boy hard in training so that he would live up to his boasts. Tom becomes an officer and, one day, while out on patrol, he sights a Nazi submarine. Naval headquarters radios the blimp to leave the attack to planes, but Beery, eager to see Tom become a hero, falsifies the orders and advises Tom to attack. The young man sinks the submarine. Lest Tom be courtmartialed for disobeying orders, Beery accepts the blame. Tom is decorated as a hero, but the men at the station ostracize him for allowing Beery to cover up for him. Discouraged, Tom asks for and receives a transfer to the ferry command. Beery, unable to change Tom's mind, quarrels with him. Months later, Beery and his blimp outfit are sent to the Burma frontier. There, he learns that Tom had been shot down in the Burma jungles, and that there was a chance to rescue him before Japanese ground troops reached him. He requests and is given permission to save the boy. Piloting his blimp through stiff Japanese fighter plane opposition, Beery manages to effect Tom's rescue. Both are decorated for their heroism.

Borden Chase wrote the screen play, Samuel Marx produced it, and William A. Wellman directed it. The cast includes Jan Clayton, Noah Beery, Sr., Henry O'Neill and others.

Morally suitable for all.

arrangement suppresses all competition between the parties or that the parties themselves are discontented with the arrangement. The interest of the public in the preservation of competition is the primary consideration. The prohibition of the statute cannot 'be evaded by good motives. The law is its own measure of right and wrong, of what it permits, or forbids, and the judgment of the courts cannot be set up against it in a supposed accommodation of its policy with the good intention of the parties, and it may be, of some good results.' . . ."

As regards to the belief of the distributors that, being the copyright owners, they may dispose of their copyrighted articles the way they see fit, Judge Atwell settled that matter well in his famous decision, affirmed by the U. S. Supreme Court, in the Interstate Case. He stated:

"This well-defined right, however, will not justify his [the copyright owner's] agreeing or combining with another person in order to deprive a third person of a complete freedom of contract. The copyright statute and the anti-trust statute are both in effect and vitally necessary . . ."

In order to make the meaning of this statement of his clear, Judge Atwell added:

"The owner of the copyrighted article may contract with the exhibitor, without the intervention of any third mind, for full and free protection, both as to price and manner of use, but when the outside mind, with an interest to serve, steps into the picture—the contracting room—and interjects, persuades and coerces the copyright owner to join with it in its protection, as against the party to whom the copyright holder is selling or contracting, then and in that event there are two or more persons engaged on the side of the copyright holder, when the law gives only one privileges or immunities. Such a unity of minds, if it be in restraint of interstate commerce, is illegal. The copyright privileges do not save it from illegality . . ."

Any person who has studied the U. S. Supreme Court's decision in the Crescent case cannot help coming to the conclusion that, to some degree, theatre divorcement has been accomplished without the introduction of a bill in Congress. What would a bill separating exhibition from production-distribution accomplish? To make it impossible for the theatre-owning producer-distributors to employ their buying power to withhold choice product from the independents. The U. S. Supreme Court's decision, in the opinion of competent legal authority whom this paper has consulted, seems to do that, for hereafter no affiliated circuit can employ either its buying power or its influence to prevent the independent exhibitor from competing for film on equal terms with the affiliated circuit.

Yes, in the opinion of this authority, the U. S. Supreme Court's decision goes further than that: it puts also the independent circuits, both big and small, in the same category as the affiliated circuits. In other words, the head of a circuit consisting of fifty theatres cannot prevent an exhibitor who owns a single theatre from competing with him for film on an equal basis.

HARRISON'S REPORTS cannot at this time say whether the U. S. Supreme Court decision in the Crescent case will bring about any radical changes in the selling system within the industry; it merely presents the facts and the opinions of a lawyer who has been correct in his opinion in other cases.

For instance, based on his opinion concerning the Interstate Case, in which Judge Atwell found both distributors and exhibitors guilty of having violated the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, HARRISON'S REPORTS, in its June 4, 1938 issue, in the second paragraph of an editorial under the heading, "Another Blow at the Producers," said:

"In accordance with the recommendation of the U. S. Supreme Court, Judge Atwell, the District Judge who tried the case, has just made formal findings. These must have shocked the master strategists of the producers; they are so sweeping that it is doubtful whether the defendants will take an appeal. If they should take such an appeal, all they could possibly accomplish would be to add the U. S. Supreme Court's approval to the damaging findings and decree of the Dallas District Court . . ."

According to this prediction, the U. S. Supreme Court, by a decision handed down on Monday, February 13, 1939, upheld Judge Atwell.

In the Crescent case, this counsel again made a prediction. In the editorial that was printed in the July 24, 1943, issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, the following statement was made in the last paragraph of the second column in the front page:

"In the first place, unless a cross-appeal should be filed by Crescent, the Supreme Court will not look into the merits of the entire case, but will limit its inquiry to the one question presented by the Government's appeal, namely, whether or not the decree should be modified by inserting the prohibition against further acquisition of theatres—and nothing more. And, while on the subject of cross-appeals, this paper believes that Crescent will not file any cross-appeal. The case seems to be too strongly in favor of the Government to hold forth much hope for a complete reversal. Hence, if Crescent should appeal, and thus ask the Supreme Court to examine into the entire case, the result might well be an affirmation of Judge Davies' decision relating to the violation of the anti-trust laws. In that event, the rulings pronounced by Judge Davies would be applicable, not only to the Crescent situation, but also to the other pending anti-trust suits, as well as to competitive situations throughout the country. Crescent no doubt recalls and will profit by the Interstate Case, where the same thing occurred . . ."

Crescent and its advisors did not heed that warning, and the result is that the U. S. Supreme Court's decision is now the law of the land.

The methods that Crescent employed in crushing its competitors were too bold and too unfair for any conscientious judge to overlook. On the back page of the June 5, 1943, issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, there was printed a list of prices that Crescent paid to the distributors that startled every exhibitor in the land. Rentals as low as \$3.90 were accepted by some distributors, and no price was ever equal to what other exhibitors, not connected with Crescent, paid. And Crescent's competitors could not obtain choice film and better runs, no matter how much more they were willing to pay, for Crescent employed its buying power to prevent that.

Reforms have always been obtained when oppressors went too far. And every reader will admit that, because of Crescent's attitude, relief has now been obtained by every exhibitor who wants to play fair. Free and open competition is now assured to all buyers of film.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXVII

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 1945

No. 1

(Semi-Annual Index—Second Half of 1944)

<i>Titles of Pictures</i>	<i>Reviewed on Page</i>
A Wave, A Wac & A Marine—Monogram (80 min.)	115
Abroad with Two Yanks—United Artists (79 min.)	123
Adventures of Kitty O'Day—Monogram (64 min.)	195
Alaska—Monogram (76 min.)	208
An American Romance—MGM (151 min.)	106
And Now Tomorrow—Paramount (85 min.)	172
Arms and the Woman—Columbia (see "Mr. Winkle Goes to War") 1944	118
Army Wives—Monogram (69 min.)	183
Arsenic and Old Lace—Warner Bros. (118 min.)	143
Atlantic City—Republic (86 min.)	127
Babes on Swing Street—Universal (70 min.)	154
Barbary Coast Gent—MGM (87 min.)	126
Belle of the Yukon—RKO (85 min.)	194
Between Two Women—MGM (83 min.)	208
Big Noise, The—20th Century-Fox (74 min.)	154
Black Magic—Monogram (65 min.)	114
Block Busters—Monogram (61 min.)	114
Blonde Fever—MGM (69 min.)	190
Bluebeard—PRC (73 min.)	166
Bordertown Trail—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
Bowery Champs—Monogram (62 min.)	174
Bowery to Broadway—Universal (95 min.)	174
Brand of the Devil—PRC (61 min.)	not reviewed
Brazil—Republic (91 min.)	175
Bride By Mistake—RKO (81 min.)	122
Can't Help Singing—Universal (89 min.)	206
Carolina Blues—Columbia (80 min.)	163
Casanova Brown—RKO (93 min.)	127
Cheyenne Wildcat—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
Climax, The—Universal (86 min.)	159
Code of the Prairie—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
Conspirators, The—Warner Bros. (102 min.)	167
Contender, The—PRC (66 min.)	118
Cowboy from Lonesome River—Columbia (55 min.)	not reviewed
Crazy Knights—Monogram (62 min.)	202
Crime By Night—Warner Bros. (73 min.)	123
Cry of the Werewolf—Columbia (64 min.)	135
Cyclone Prairie Rangers—Columbia (56 m.)	not reviewed
Dancing in Manhattan—Columbia (61 min.)	202
Dangerous Journey—20th Century-Fox (73 min.)	132
Dangerous Mists—Columbia (see "U-Boat Prisoner") 1944	110
Dangerous Passage—Paramount (62 min.)	208
Dark Mountain—Paramount (56 min.)	142
Dark Waters—United Artists (90 min.)	179
Dead Man's Eyes—Universal (64 min.)	151
Dead or Alive—PRC (56 min.)	not reviewed
Delinquent Daughters—PRC (72 min.)	118
Destiny—Universal (65 min.)	198
Dixie Jamboree—PRC (71 min.)	110
Double Exposure—Paramount (64 min.)	206
Doughgirls, The—Warner Bros. (102 min.)	142
Dragon Seed—MGM (145 min.)	119
End of the Road—Republic (51 min.)	183
Enemy of Women—Monogram (87 min.)	146
Enter Arsene Lupin—Universal (72 min.)	187
Ever Since Venus—Columbia (73 min.)	182
Experiment Perilous—RKO (91 min.)	198
Faces in the Fog—Republic (71 min.)	170
Falcon in Hollywood, The—RKO (68 min.)	194
Falcon in Mexico, The—RKO (70 min.)	124
Farewell My Lovely—RKO (96 min.)	198
Firebrands of Arizona—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
Frenchman's Creek—Paramount (113 min.)	155
Fuzzy Settles Down—PRC (60 min.)	not reviewed
Gangsters of the Frontier—PRC (58 m.)	not reviewed
Gentle Annie—MGM (80 min.)	207
Ghost Guns—Monogram (60 min.)	not reviewed
Girl Rush, The—RKO (66 min.)	171
Girl Who Dared, The—Republic (56 min.)	107
Goin' to Town—RKO (70 min.)	160
Great Mike, The—PRC (71 min.)	167
Greenwich Village—20th Century-Fox (83 min.)	130
Guest in the House—United Artists (117 min.)	199
Gypsy Wildcat—Universal (75 min.)	130
Heavenly Days—RKO (72 min.)	126
Here Come the Waves—Paramount (99 min.)	206
Hi' Beautiful—Universal (65 min.)	186
Hollywood Canteen—Warner Bros. (124 min.)	200
House of Frankenstein—Universal (70 min.)	207
I Accuse My Parents—PRC (69 min.)	182
I'll Be Seeing You—United Artists (85 min.)	211
I'm from Arkansas—PRC (68 min.)	190
Impatient Years, The—Columbia (90 min.)	154
In Rosie's Room—Republic (See "Rosie, the Riveter")	51
In Society—Universal (73 min.)	130
In the Meantime, Darling—20th Century-Fox (72 m.)	154
Irish Eyes Are Smiling—20th Century-Fox (90 m.)	162
Janie—Warner Bros. (101 min.)	124
Jungle Woman—Universal (60 min.)	107
Kansas City Kitty—Columbia (72 min.)	135
Keys of the Kingdom, The—20th Century-Fox (137 m.)	203
Kismet—MGM (100 min.)	138
Lake Placid Serenade—Republic (85 min.)	208
Land of the Outlaws—Monogram (60 min.)	not reviewed
Last Horseman, The—Columbia (54 min.)	not reviewed
Last Ride, The—Warner Bros. (57 min.)	151
Laura—20th Century-Fox (88 min.)	168
Leave It To the Irish—Monogram (61 min.)	114
Lights of Old Sante Fe—Republic (78 m.)	not reviewed
Lost in a Harem—MGM (89 min.)	144
Machine Gun Mama—PRC (62 min.)	111
Mile. Fif—RKO (69 min.)	122
Main Street After Dark—MGM (57 min.)	194
Maisie Goes to Reno—MGM (90 min.)	131
Man in Half Moon Street, The—Paramount (92 m.)	170
Marked Trails—Monogram (59 min.)	not reviewed
Mark of the Whistler—Columbia (60 min.)	178
Marriage is a Private Affair—MGM (116 min.)	134
Master Race, The—RKO (97 min.)	155
Meet Me in St. Louis—MGM (113 min.)	178
Meet Miss Bobby Socks—Columbia (68 min.)	186
Men of the Sea—PRC (49 min.)	120
Merry Monahans, The—Universal (91 min.)	134
Ministry of Fear—Paramount (84 min.)	172
Minstrel Man—PRC (68 min.)	106
Missing Juror, The—Columbia (67 min.)	182
Moonlight and Cactus—Universal (60 min.)	170
Mr. Winkle Goes to War—Columbia (77 min.)	118
Mrs. Parkington—MGM (124 min.)	156
Mummy's Curse, The—Universal (60 min.)	210
Mummy's Ghost, The—Universal (60 min.)	111
Murder in the Blue Room—Universal (61 min.)	174
Murder in Thornton Square, The—MGM (See "Gaslight")	78
Murder, My Sweet—RKO (see "Farewell, My Lovely") 1944	198
Music for Millions—MGM (118 min.)	203
Music in Manhattan—RKO (81 min.)	123
My Buddy—Republic (69 min.)	158
My Gal Loves Music—Universal (63 min.)	191
My Pal, Wolf—RKO (75 min.)	159
National Barn Dance—Paramount (76 min.)	142
National Velvet—20th Century-Fox (125 min.)	199
Nevada—RKO (62 min.)	200
Night Club Girl—Universal (61 min.)	200
None But the Lonely Heart—RKO (113 min.)	162
Nothing But Trouble—MGM (69 min.)	195

Oath of Vengeance—PRC (57 min.).....not reviewed  
 Oh, What a Night!—Monogram (71 min.)..... 132  
 Old Texas Trail, The—Universal (59 min.)...not reviewed  
 Once Upon a Time—Columbia (89 min.)..... 110  
 One Body Too Many—Paramount (75 min.).....172  
 One Mysterious Night—Columbia (63 min.).....138  
 Our Hearts Were Young and Gay—Paramount (81 m.)143

Pearl of Death—Universal (69 min.).....144  
 Practically Yours—Paramount (90 min.).....206  
 Princess and the Pirate, The—RKO (94 min.).....166

Rainbow Island—Paramount (97 min.).....143  
 Reckless Age—Universal (63 min.).....143  
 Riders of the Sante Fe—Universal (60 m.)...not reviewed  
 Rustler's Hideout—PRC (55 min.).....not reviewed

Saddle Leather Law—Columbia (55 min.)...not reviewed  
 San Antonio Kid—Republic (56 min.).....not reviewed  
 San Diego, I Love You—Universal (83 min.).....147  
 San Fernando Valley—Republic (74 m.).....not reviewed  
 Seven Doors to Death—PRC (61 min.)..... 131  
 Seventh Cross, The—MGM (111 min.)..... 119  
 Shadow of Suspicion—Monogram (68 min.).....166  
 Shadows in the Night—Columbia (67 min.)..... 127  
 She's a Soldier, Too—Columbia (67 min.).....147  
 Sheriff of Las Vegas—Republic (55 min.)...not reviewed  
 Sheriff of Sundown—Republic (56 min.)...not reviewed  
 Silver Key, The—Columbia (See "Girl in the Case").. 62  
 Since You Went Away—United Artists (171 min.).. 119  
 Sing, Neighbor, Sing—Republic (70 min.)..... 131  
 Singing Sheriff, The—Universal (63 min.).....150  
 Something for the Boys—20th Century-Fox (87 m.)..179  
 Song of the Range—Monogram (57 min.)...not reviewed  
 Sonora Stage Coach—Monogram (59 min.)...not reviewed  
 Soul of a Monster, The—Columbia (61 min.).....150  
 Stagecoach to Monterey—Republic (55 min.)...not reviewed  
 Storm Over Lisbon—Republic (86 min.).....142  
 Strange Affair—Columbia (78 min.).....167  
 Strangers in the Night—Republic (56 min.).....134  
 Sunday Dinner for a Soldier—20th Century-Fox (86m).199  
 Suspect, The—Universal (85 min.).....210  
 Sweet and Low-down—20th Century-Fox (75 min.).. 126  
 Sweethearts on Parade—Monogram (See  
 "Sweethearts of the U.S.A.")..... 14  
 Swing Hostess—PRC (76 min.).....163  
 Swing in the Saddle—Columbia (69 min.).....not reviewed

Tahiti Nights—Columbia (63 min.).....210  
 Take It or Leave It—20th Century-Fox (71 min.).... 115  
 Tall in the Saddle—RKO (87 min.).....155  
 That's My Baby—Republic (68 min.).....150  
 Thin Man Goes Home, The—MGM (100 min.).....191  
 Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo—MGM (138 min.).....187  
 3 Is a Family—United Artists (80 min.).....191  
 Three Caballeros, The—RKO (72 min.).....202  
 Three Little Sisters—Republic (68 min.)..... 122  
 Three of a Kind—Monogram (67 min.)..... 106  
 Till We Meet Again—Paramount (88 min.).....144  
 To Have and Have Not—Warner Bros. (100 min.)...168  
 Together Again—Columbia (101 min.).....178  
 Tomorrow, the World—United Artists (86 min.)....207  
 Town Went Wild, The—PRC (78 min.).....186  
 Tropicana—Columbia (see "The Heat's On") 1943..194  
 Twilight on the Prairie—Universal (62 min.).....146

U-Boat Prisoner—Columbia (67 min.)..... 110  
 Unwritten Code, The—Columbia (61 min.).....158  
 Utah Kid, The—Monogram (53 min.).....not reviewed

Very Thought of You, The—Warner Bros. (99 min.)..171  
 Vigilantes of Dodge City—Republic (55 m.)...not reviewed

West of the Rio Grande—Monogram  
 (59 min.).....not reviewed  
 When Strangers Marry—Monogram (67 min.).....146  
 When the Lights Go On Again—PRC (74 min.)....158  
 Whispering Skull, The—PRC (56 min.).....not reviewed  
 Wild Horse Phantom—PRC (56 min.).....not reviewed  
 Wilson—20th Century-Fox (155 min.)..... 128  
 Wing and a Prayer—20th Century-Fox (95 min.).... 118  
 Winged Victory—20th Century-Fox (130 min.).....190  
 Woman in the Window—RKO (99 min.).....168

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

### Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

6022 The Mark of the Whistler—Dix-Carter....Nov. 2  
 6033 Sergeant Mike—Parks-Bates .....Nov. 9  
 6202 Cyclone Prairie Rangers—Starrett (56 m.)..Nov. 9  
 6040 The Missing Juror—Carter-Bannon.....Nov. 16  
 6032 She's a Sweetheart—Frazee-Parks.....Dec. 7  
 6038 Dancing in Manhattan—Donnell-Brady...Dec. 14  
 6203 Saddle Leather Law—Starrett (55 m.).....Dec. 21  
 6003 Together Again—Boyer-Dunne .....Dec. 22  
 Tahiti Nights—Falkenburg-O'Brien .....Dec. 28  
 Let's Go Steady—Parrish-Moran.....Jan. 4  
 Youth on Trial—Collins-Reed.....Jan. 11  
 Eadie Was a Lady—Miller-Besser.....Jan. 18  
 I Love a Mystery—Bannon-Foch.....Jan. 25  
 Sing Me a Song of Texas—Lane-McIntyre...Feb. 8  
 Leave it to Blondie—Singleton-Lake.....Feb. 22  
 Crime Doctor's Courage—Baxter-Crane....Feb. 27

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

#### Block 9

501 The Seventh Cross—Tracy-Gurie.....September  
 502 Barbary Coast Gent—Beery.....September  
 503 Waterloo Bridge—Taylor-Leigh (reissue)..September  
 504 Maisie Goes to Reno—Sothorn-Hodiak...September  
 505 Marriage is a Private Affair—Turner-  
 Craig .....October  
 506 Kismet—Dietrich-Colman .....October  
 507 Mrs. Parkington—Pidgeon-Garson .....November  
 508 Naughty Marietta—MacDonald-Eddy  
 (reissue) .....November  
 510 An American Romance—Donlevy.....November  
 509 Lost in a Harem—Abbott & Costello.....December

#### Block 10

513 The Thin Man Goes Home—Powell-Loy...Jan.-Mar.  
 514 Main Street After Dark—Arnold.....Jan.-Mar.  
 515 Music for Millions—O'Brien-Allyson.....Jan.-Mar.  
 516 Blonde Fever—Astor-Dorn .....Jan.-Mar.  
 517 This Man's Navy—Beery-Drake.....Jan.-Mar.  
 518 Between Two Women—Johnson-Barrymore..Jan.-Mar.  
 519 Nothing But Trouble—Laurel & Hardy....Jan.-Mar.

#### Specials

500 Dragon Seed—Hepburn-Huston .....August  
 511 Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo—Tracy-Johnson..January  
 512 Meet Me in St. Louis—Garland-O'Brien....January

### Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

461 Song of the Range—Wakely (57 m.).....Dec. 1  
 421 Crazy Knights—Gilbert-Howard .....Dec. 8  
 416 Shadow of Suspicion—Weaver-Cookson....Dec. 15  
 403 Alaska—Taylor-Lindsay (re.).....Dec. 22  
 409 Bowery Champs—East Side Kids.....Dec. 29  
 455 Navajo Trail—J. M. Brown.....Jan. 5  
 414 Army Wives—Knox-Rambeau .....Jan. 12  
 420 Adventures of Kitty O'Day—Parker-Cookson..Jan. 19  
 417 The Jade Mask—Sidney Toler.....Jan. 26  
 401 They Shall Have Faith—Storm-Brown.....Jan. 26  
 The Cisco Kid Returns—Renaldo.....Feb. 9  
 454 Gun Smoke—J. M. Brown.....Feb. 16  
 John Dillinger, Mobster—Lowe-Jeffreys ....Feb. 23  
 G. I. Honeymoon—Storm-Cookson.....Mar. 23

### Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

#### Block 3

4411 Here Come the Waves—Crosby-Hutton.....  
 4412 Dangerous Passage—Lowery-Brooks.....  
 4413 For Whom the Bell Tolls—Cooper-Bergman.....  
 4414 Practically Yours—Colbert-MacMurray.....  
 4415 Double Exposure—Morris-Kelly.....  
 Special  
 4432 Sign of the Cross—Reissue.....



# PRC Pictures, Inc. Features

(625 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

- 555 Wild Horse Phantom—Crabbe (56 m.).....Oct. 28  
510 I'm from Arkansas—Bennett-Adrian.....Oct. 31  
512 I Accuse My Parents—Hughes-Lowell.....Nov. 4  
552 Dead or Alive—Texas Rangers (56 m.).....Nov. 9  
506 Bluebeard—Carradine-Parker.....Nov. 11  
511 The Great Mike—Erwin-Henry.....Nov. 15  
514 Rogues' Gallery—Jenks-Raymond.....Dec. 6  
556 Oath of Vengeance—Buster Crabbe (57 m.)...Dec. 9  
501 The Town Went Wild—Lydon-Bartholomew...Dec. 15  
513 Castle of Crimes—English-made (re.).....Dec. 22  
553 The Whispering Skull—Texas Rangers (56m)...Dec. 29  
Fog Island—Atwill-Zucco.....Jan. 31  
His Brother's Ghost—Buster Crabbe.....Feb. 3  
Kid Sister—Pryor-Clark.....Feb. 6  
Marked for Murder—Texas Rangers.....Feb. 8  
The Spell of Amy Nugent—English cast.....Feb. 10  
507 The Man Who Walked Alone—O'Brien-  
Aldridge (re.).....Feb. 15  
515 Hollywood & Vine—Ellison-McKay (re.).....Mar. 1  
Strange Illusion—Lydon-William.....Mar. 15  
Shadows of Death—Buster Crabbe.....Mar. 24  
Crime, Inc.—Tilton-Neal.....Mar. 31

# Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

1943-44

- 346 Lights of Old Sante Fe—Roy Rogers (78m.)...Nov. 6  
3308 Red River Valley—Autry (reissue).....Dec. 1  
(More to come)

# Beginning of 1944-45 Season

- 3311 Tucson Raiders—Elliott-Hayes (55 m.)....May 14  
3312 Marshal of Reno—Elliott-Blake (56 m.)....July 2  
461 Silver City Kid—Lane-Stewart (55 m.)....July 20  
451 Bordertown Trail—Burnette-Carson (56m)...Aug. 11  
401 Sing, Neighbor, Sing—Taylor-Terry.....Aug. 12  
3313 San Antonio Kid—Elliott-Stirling (56 m.)...Aug. 16  
462 Stagecoach to Monterey—Lane-Stewart  
(55 m.).....Sept. 15  
3314 Cheyenne Wildcat—Elliott-Blake (56 m.)...Sept. 30  
452 Code of the Prairie—Burnette-Carson (56m)...Oct. 6  
403 My Buddy—Barry-Terry.....Oct. 12  
463 Sheriff of Sundown—Lane-Stirling (56 m.)...Nov. 7  
402 End of the Road—Norris-Abbott.....Nov. 10  
3315 Vigilantes of Dodge City—Elliott (55 m.)...Nov. 15  
404 Faces in the Fog—Withers-Kelly.....Nov. 30  
405 Brazil—Guizar-Bruce.....Nov. 30  
453 Firebrands of Arizona—Burnette-Carson  
(56 m.).....Dec. 1  
408 Thoroughbreds—Neal-Mara.....Dec. 23  
407 The Big Bonanza—Arlen-Livingston.....Dec. 30  
3316 Sheriff of Las Vegas—Elliott-Blake (55 m.)...Dec. 31  
409 Grissly's Million's—Kelly-Grey.....Jan. 16

# RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No National Release Dates)

Block 2

- 506 Girl Rush—Carney-Brown.....  
508 Falcon in Hollywood—Conway-Borg.....  
507 Murder, My Sweet—Powell-Shirley (formerly  
"Farewell, My Lovely").....  
509 Nevada—Mitchum-Jeffreys.....  
510 Experiment Perilous—Lamar-Brent.....  
Specials  
551 The Princess and the Pirate—Bob Hope.....  
581 Casanova Brown—Cooper-Wright.....  
582 Woman in the Window—Bennett-Robinson.....  
583 Belle of the Yukon—Scott-Lee.....

# Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

Block 3

- 506 The Big Noise—Laurel & Hardy.....October  
507 In the Meantime, Darling—Crain-Latimore...October  
508 Irish Eyes Are Smiling—Woolley-Haymes...October  
Block 4  
509 Laura—Andrews-Tierney.....November  
510 Something for the Boys—O'Shea-Blaine...November

Block 5

- 512 Winged Victory—McCallister-O'Brien....December  
513 Sunday Dinner for a Soldier—Baxter-  
Hodiak.....December

Block 6

- 514 Keys of the Kingdom—Peck-Mitchell.....January  
511 The Way Ahead—David Niven.....January  
515 The Fighting Lady—Documentary.....January  
Special  
530 Wilson—Knox-Fitzgerald.....

# United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- Since You Went Away—All star cast.....Special  
Dark Waters—Oberon-Tone.....Nov. 10  
3 Is a Family—Ruggles-Broderick.....Nov. 23  
Guest in the House—Baxter-Bellamy.....Dec. 8  
Tomorrow, the World—March-Field.....Dec. 29  
I'll Be Seeing You—Rogers-Cotten-Temple.....Jan. 5  
Mr. Emmanuel—English-made.....Jan. 19

# Universal Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

- 9009 The Climax—Foster-Karloff.....Oct. 20  
9072 Bowery to Broadway—Oakie-Montez.....Nov. 3  
9026 Dead Man's Eyes—Chaney-Parker.....Nov. 10  
9081 Riders of the Sante Fe—Rod Cameron  
(60 m.).....Nov. 10  
9029 Reckless Age—Gloria Jean.....Nov. 17  
9018 Enter Arsene Lupin—Raines-Kovin.....Nov. 24  
9034 Murder in the Blue Room—McDonald-Cook...Dec. 1  
9031 Hi' Beautiful—O'Driscoll-Beery.....Dec. 8  
My Gal Loves Music—Crosby-McDonald...Dec. 15  
9082 The Old Texas Trail—Cameron-Dew (59m)...Dec. 15  
Destiny—Jean-Curtis (formerly  
"The Fugitive").....Dec. 22  
Can't Help Singing—Durbin-Paige.....Dec. 29  
Night Club Girl—Austin-Norris.....Jan. 5  
She Gets Her Man—Davis-Errol.....Jan. 12  
Under Western Skies—O'Driscoll-Beery, Jr....Jan. 19  
The Suspect—Laughton-Raines (reset).....Jan. 26  
Here Come the Co-eds—Abbott & Costello...Feb. 2  
Her Lucky Night—Beery, Jr.-O'Driscoll....Feb. 9  
House of Frankenstein—Karloff-Chaney....Feb. 16  
The Mummy's Curse—Lon Chaney.....Feb. 16  
Frisco Sal—Foster-Bey.....Feb. 23

# Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

- 406 The Very Thought of You—Morgan-Parker...Nov. 11  
407 The Doughgirls—Sheridan-Carson.....Nov. 25  
409 Hollywood Canteen—All star cast.....Dec. 30  
410 To Have and Have Not—Bogart-Bacall.....Jan. 20  
Objective Burma—Flynn-Hull.....Feb. 10

# SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

## Columbia—One Reel

- 6702 As the Fly Flies—Phantasy (6 m.).....Nov. 17  
6854 Screen Snapshots No. 4 (9½ m.).....Nov. 22  
6803 Aqua Maids—Sports (9½ m.).....Nov. 24  
6751 Be Patient, Patient—Fox & Crow (7 m.)...Nov. 30  
6654 Community Sings No. 4.....Dec. 1  
6953 Rootin' Tootin' Band—Film Vodvil (11 m.)...Dec. 8  
5657 Christmas Carols—Com. Sings (reissue)  
(10½ m.).....Dec. 8  
6804 Striking Champions—Sports.....Dec. 22  
6855 Screen Snapshots No. 5 (10 m.).....Dec. 28  
6655 Community Sings No. 5 (9 m.).....Jan. 1  
6501 Dog, Cat & Canary—Col. Rhap. (6 m.) (re.)...Jan. 5  
6602 Kickapoo Juice—Li'l Abner (re.).....Jan. 12  
6752 The Egg Yegg—Fox & Crow.....Jan. 19  
6856 Screen Snapshots No. 6 (9 m.).....Jan. 26  
6805 Kings of the Fairway—Sports.....Feb. 2  
6954 Korn Kobbler—Film Vodvil (11 m.).....Feb. 2  
6502 Rippling Romance—Col. Rhap. ....Feb. 9



**Columbia—Two Reels**

6127	The Vanishing Dagger—Black Arrow No. 8 (15 m.)	Dec. 8
6128	Escape from Death—Black Arrow No. 9 (15 m.)	Dec. 8
6429	Heather and Yon—Clyde (17 m.)	Dec. 15
6129	The Gold Cache—Black Arrow No. 10 (15 m.)	Dec. 22
6130	Curse of the Killer—Black Arrow No. 11 (15 m.)	Dec. 29
6422	She Snoops to Conquer—V. Vague	Dec. 29
6131	Test by Torture—Black Arrow No. 12 (15 m.)	Jan. 5
6410	Woo, Woo!—Hugh Herbert (16 m.)	Jan. 5
6132	Sign of Evil—Black Arrow No. 13 (15 m.)	Jan. 12
6133	An Indian's Revenge—Black Arrow No. 14 (15 m.)	Jan. 19
6403	Three Pests in a Mess—Stooges (15 m.)	Jan. 19
6134	The Black Arrow Triumphs—Black Arrow No. 15 (15 m.)	Jan. 26

**Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel**  
**1943-44**

K-574	A Lady Fights Back—Pass. Par. (10 m.)	Nov. 11
S-558	Safety Sleuth—Pete Smith (9 m.)	Nov. 25
T-522	Wandering Here and There—Travel. (9m.)	Dec. 9
W-541	Mouse Trouble—Cartoon (7 m.)	Dec. 23
W-542	Barney Bear's Polar Pet—Cartoon (7 m.)	Dec. 30
W-543	Screwy Truant—Cartoon (7 m.)	Jan. 13

(More to come)

**Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels**  
**1943-44**

A-501	Dark Shadows—Special (22 m.)	Dec. 16
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(More to come)

**Paramount—One Reel**

U4-2	Two Gun Rusty—Puppetoon (7½ m.)	Dec. 1
E4-1	She-Sick Sailors—Popeye (7 m.)	Dec. 8
R4-3	Long Shots and Favorites—Sport. (9 m.)	Dec. 8
P4-2	Gabriel Churchkitten—Noveltoon (7 m.)	Dec. 15
J4-2	Popular Science No. 2 (10 m.)	Dec. 22
D4-2	Birthday Party—Little Lulu (9 m.)	Dec. 29
U4-3	Hot Lip Jasper—Puppetoon (7 m.)	Jan. 5
L4-2	Unusual Occupations No. 2 (10 m.)	Jan. 12
Y4-2	Who's Who in Animal Land—Speaking of Animals (9 m.)	Jan. 19
R4-4	Out Fishin'—Spotlight	Jan. 26
E4-2	Pop-Pie-Ala-Mode—Popeye	Jan. 26
P4-3	When G. I. Johnny Comes Home—Novel...	Feb. 2
J4-3	Popular Science No. 3	Feb. 16
D4-3	Beau Ties—Little Lulu	Mar. 2
L4-3	Unusual Occupations No. 3	Mar. 9
Y4-3	In the Public Eye—Speak. of Animals.	Mar. 16
E4-3	Tops in the Big Top—Popeye	Mar. 16
U4-4	Jasper Tell—Puppetoon (8 m.)	Mar. 23
R4-5	Blue Winners—Spotlight	Mar. 30

**Paramount—Two Reels**

FF4-1	Bonnie Lassie—Musical Parade (19 m.)	Oct. 6
FF4-2	Star Bright—Musical Parade (20 m.)	Dec. 15
FF4-3	Bombalera—Musical Parade (20 m.)	Feb. 9

**Republic—Two Reels**

481	Zorro's Black Whip—Lewis-Stirling (12 episodes)	Dec. 16
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**RKO—One Reel**

54302	School for Dogs—Disney (8 m.)	Oct. 6
54202	Flicker Flashbacks No. 2 (7½ m.)	Oct. 27
54303	Saddle Starlets—Sportscope (8 m.)	Nov. 3
54304	Parallel Skiing—Sportscope (8 m.)	Dec. 1
54105	Donald's Off Day—Disney (7 m.)	Dec. 8
54106	Tiger Trouble—Disney (7 m.)	Jan. 5
54107	The Clock Watcher—Disney	Jan. 26

**RKO—Two Reels**

53202	Swing It—Headliners (16 m.)	Oct. 20
53401	Go Feather Your Nest—Edgar Kennedy (17 m.)	Oct. 23
53702	He Forgot to Remember—Leon Errol (17m.)	Oct. 27
53101	West Point—This is America (17 m.)	Nov. 17
53203	Swing Vacation—Headliners (19 m.)	Dec. 1
53102	New Americans—This is America (19½m.)	Dec. 15

**Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel**

5254	Black, Gold & Cactus—Adventure (9 m.)	Nov. 10
5506	Mighty Mouse at the Circus—Terry. (7 m.)	Nov. 17
5507	Gandy's Dream Girl—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Dec. 8
5352	Trolling for Strikes—Sports (8 m.)	Dec. 15
5508	Dear Old Switzerland—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Dec. 22
5257	Canyons of the Sun—Adventure	Jan. 5
5509	Mighty Mouse & the Pirate—Terry. (6 m.)	Jan. 12
5510	Port of Missing Mice—Terrytoon	Feb. 2
5353	Novia Scotia—Sports	Feb. 9
5511	Ants in Your Pantry—Terrytoon	Feb. 16
5255	City of Paradox—Adventure (8 m.) (re.)	Mar. 2
5112	Raiding the Raiders—Terrytoon	Mar. 9
5256	Alaskan Grandeur—Adventure (8 m.) (re.)	Mar. 16

**Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels**

Vol. 11 No. 3—	Uncle Sam, Mariner—March of Time (16 m.)	Nov. 3
Vol. 11 No. 4—	Inside China Today—March of Time (17½ m.)	Dec. 1
Vol. 11 No. 5—	The Unknown Battle—March of Time (18½ m.)	Dec. 29

**Universal—One Reel**

9352	Dogs for Show—Var. Views (9 m.)	Nov. 6
9233	Ski for Two—Cartune (7 m.)	Nov. 13
9353	Mr. Chimp Goes to Coney Island—Var. Views (9 m.)	Dec. 10
9372	One-Man Newspaper—Per. Odd. (9 m.)	Dec. 17
9234	Pied Piper of Basin St.—Cartune (7 m.)	Jan. 15

**Universal—Two Reels**

9122	Harmony Highway—Musical (15 m.)	Nov. 22
9686	The Fatal Plunge—River Boat No. 6 (17m.)	Nov. 28
9687	Toll of the Storm—River Boat No. 7 (17m.)	Dec. 5
9123	On the Mellow Side—Musical (15 m.)	Dec. 6
9688	Break in the Levy—River Boat No. 8 (17m.)	Dec. 12
9112	Lili Marlene—Special (21 m.)	Dec. 13
9689	Trapped in the Quicksand—River Boat No. 9 (17 m.)	Dec. 19
9690	Flaming Havoc—River Boat No. 10 (17 m.)	Dec. 20
9691	Electrocuted—River Boat No. 11 (17 m.)	Dec. 27
9692	A Desperate Chance—River Boat No. 12 (17 m.)	Jan. 3
9693	The Boomerang—River Boat No. 13 (17 m.)	Jan. 10
9124	Jive Busters—Musical (15 m.)	Jan. 17
8110	Diver vs. Devilfish—Special	Jan. 17
9125	Melody Parade—Musical (15 m.)	Feb. 14

**Vitaphone—One Reel**

1603	Harry Owen's Royal Hawaiians—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)	Nov. 4
1403	Outdoor Living—Varieties (10 m.)	Nov. 4
1304	I Love to Singa—Hit Parade (7 m.)	Nov. 18
1604	Sonny Dunham & Orch.—Mel. Mas. (10m.)	Nov. 25
1305	Plenty of Money & You—Hit Par. (7 m.)	Dec. 9
1605	Jammin' the Blues—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)	Dec. 16
1501	California Here We Are—Sports (re.) (10m.)	Dec. 16
1502	Birds & Beasts Were There—Sports (10 m.)	Dec. 30
1721	Herr Meets Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)	Jan. 13
1503	Glamour in Sports—Sports (10 m.)	Jan. 13
1701	Draftee Daffy—Looney Tune (7 m.)	Jan. 20
1306	Fella with a Fiddle—Hit. Par. (7 m.)	Jan. 20
1606	Rhythm of the Rhumba—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)	Jan. 27
1701	Draftee Daffy—Looney Tune (7 m.)	Jan. 27
1504	Bikes and Skis—Sports (10 m.)	Feb. 10
1722	Unruly Hare—Bugs Bunny (re.) (7 m.)	Feb. 10
1307	When I Yoo Hoo—Hit Parade (7 m.)	Feb. 24
1702	Trap Happy Porky—Looney Tune (7 m.)	Feb. 24

**Vitaphone—Two Reels**

1104	I Won't Play—Featurette (20 m.)	Nov. 11
1105	Nautical but Nice—Featurette (20 m.)	Dec. 2
1101	I Am An American—Featurette (20 m.)	Dec. 23
1002	Beachhead to Berlin—Special (20 m.)	Jan. 6
1106	Congo—Featurette (20 m.)	Feb. 3
1003	Pledge to Bataan—Special (20 m.)	Feb. 17

**NEWSWEEKLY  
NEW YORK  
RELEASE DATES****Pathe News**

55139	Sat. (O)	Jan. 6
55240	Wed. (E)	Jan. 10
55141	Sat. (O)	Jan. 13
55242	Wed. (E)	Jan. 17
55143	Sat. (O)	Jan. 20
55244	Wed. (E)	Jan. 24
55145	Sat. (O)	Jan. 27
55246	Wed. (E)	Jan. 31
55147	Sat. (O)	Feb. 3
55248	Wed. (E)	Feb. 7
55149	Sat. (O)	Feb. 10
55250	Wed. (E)	Feb. 14
55151	Sat. (O)	Feb. 17

**Metrotone News**

234	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 4
235	Tues. (O)	Jan. 9
236	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 11
237	Tues. (O)	Jan. 16
238	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 18
239	Tues. (O)	Jan. 23
240	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 25
241	Tues. (O)	Jan. 30
242	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 1
243	Tues. (O)	Feb. 6
244	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 8
245	Tues. (O)	Feb. 13
246	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 15
247	Tues. (O)	Feb. 20

**Fox Movietone**

36	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 4
37	Tues. (O)	Jan. 9
38	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 11
39	Tues. (O)	Jan. 16
40	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 18
41	Tues. (O)	Jan. 23
42	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 25
43	Tues. (O)	Jan. 30
44	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 1
45	Tues. (O)	Feb. 6
46	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 8
47	Tues. (O)	Feb. 13
48	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 15
49	Tues. (O)	Feb. 20

**Paramount News**

37	Sunday (O)	Jan. 7
38	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 11
39	Sunday (O)	Jan. 14
40	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 18
41	Sunday (O)	Jan. 21
42	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 25
43	Sunday (O)	Jan. 28
44	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 1
45	Sunday (O)	Feb. 4
46	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 8
47	Sunday (O)	Feb. 11
48	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 15
49	Sunday (O)	Feb. 18

**Universal**

360	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 4
361	Tues. (O)	Jan. 9
362	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 11
363	Tues. (O)	Jan. 16
364	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 18
365	Tues. (O)	Jan. 23
366	Thurs. (E)	Jan. 25
367	Tues. (O)	Jan. 30
368	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 1
369	Tues. (O)	Feb. 6
370	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 8
371	Tues. (O)	Feb. 13
372	Thurs. (E)	Feb. 15
373	Tues. (O)	Feb. 20

**All American News**

115	Friday	Jan. 5
116	Friday	Jan. 12
117	Friday	Jan. 19
118	Friday	Jan. 26
119	Friday	Feb. 2
120	Friday	Feb. 9
121	Friday	Feb. 16



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....\$15.00  
U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50  
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Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50  
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Room 1812

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Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

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Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 1945

No. 2

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## MUST THE AMERICAN EXHIBITOR SUBSIDIZE FOREIGN PRODUCTION?

The idea of commerce among the nations of the world without the restrictions of burdensome duties, as advocated by Cordell Hull, former Secretary of State, is a fine one. Mr. Hull went under the theory that people who do business do not fight, unless it be, of course, that some nations, like individuals, want to live on the toil of others, unwilling to contribute anything themselves to the general welfare.

But it seems as if some of the very nations we have been helping do their share in saving themselves and in contributing to the efforts of other Allied nations to save the world from slavery are paying us back by placing restrictions upon our commerce. They are placing upon the American motion pictures restrictions that are contrary to the theory of Mr. Hull and of the general American policy. They are so envious of the progress that the American motion pictures have made through the ingenuity of the American producers that they are trying to shackle it by means of restrictions by quotas and other methods, such as compelling the American producers to dub films in the country to which they are exported.

I am referring particularly to France and Spain, not to mention Argentina and even Great Britain. France wants to make the American exhibitors support the French film industry by means of reciprocity; that is, the French Government is willing to permit the importation into France of a given number of American films provided the American producers import a given number of French films to be played in American theatres. Spain has imposed upon the American distributors the obligation of dubbing the Spanish language in Spain, where the facilities are limited, instead of in the United States, where the work can be done most efficiently. Great Britain has increased the quota; that is, Britain allows American films to enter Great Britain only if the American distributors import into the United States a given number of British pictures. And this quota will increase as time goes on. Even little Switzerland has imposed a quota upon the American distributors, if the dispatches in the newspapers are correct.

According to a dispatch in the New York Herald Tribune of December 21, Major Henry Adams Proctor, in a House of Commons debate regarding American films, stated the following:

"We have been for many years in this country getting a very raw deal from American producers, and the whole of the American film industry has dealt very harshly with products made in this country. This is due to the fact that financiers in the industry,

and especially American controllers, see to it that the English film will not be a competition with American production. We are equal to the Americans in direction, script, writers and actors, and we have the peculiar quality of voice that makes English sound like a flute against the American tin whistle."

It is difficult to make the English understand that, so far as the American exhibitors are concerned, there is no prejudice against the motion pictures of any nation, and least of all against British films, which use the same language, so long as these pictures draw at the box-office. The trouble with the British producers, however, is that they have been whining all these years but have done nothing about the very thing that would make the English pictures popular among American audiences. Have they ever spent a dollar in this country to advertise the British stars? Have they tried to obtain publicity in the American newspapers and other informative media to apprise the American public that a given English novel, which may have had a great circulation in the United States, was in the process of production in England so as to arouse a desire among the American public to see it when it was released in the United States? No! They did nothing so elementary to help their pictures or their stars attract the American picture-going public to the box-offices of theatres.

Why should the American exhibitor book English pictures when he knows in advance that they will not attract the public? Why should he pay his money to buy an English picture he cannot sell to the American public? The Honorable Major Henry Adams Proctor must put forward a better reason than the one he has thus far advanced if he wishes to support his contention that the American film industry has dealt harshly with the pictures made in his country. As for his boast that the English voice "makes English sound like a flute against the American tin whistle," HARRISON'S REPORTS forgives him, for the Honorable member of the British Parliament has never heard the English of the British films in America with American ears. If he had, in most instances he would not understand it.

And now about the French. According to the London Bureau of the *Motion Picture Herald*, the French Embassy in London stated to the London representative of that paper that the French Government is determined to maintain the French film industry by demanding of other nations that they show French pictures just as French theatres are showing the pictures of other nations. In other words, the French Government expects the American exhibitors to book

(Continued on last page)

**"The Great Bonanza" with Richard Arlen,  
Jane Frazee and Robert Livingston**  
(*Republic, Dec. 30; time, 69 min.*)

Routine program fare. It is a western-like melodrama, which, despite its slow start, builds up enough excitement in the final reels to satisfy the ardent followers of this type of entertainment. The chief fault with the picture is the loosely written screenplay, but the action fans will probably overlook that fact, for the action has many of the ingredients they enjoy—fist fights, fast riding, and a shooting duel between the outlaws and the law-abiding citizens. In addition, it has comedy, some music, and a romance. The action takes place during the Civil War era:—

Unfairly court-martialed for cowardice in battle, Richard Arlen, Cavalry Captain in the Union Army, escapes from custody. Accompanied by George "Gabby" Hayes, his grizzled friend, Arlen goes to Nevada Springs, where Bobby Driscoll, his eight-year-old brother, lived with Robert Livingston, his boyhood friend, owner of a dance palace. Arlen, to take the child out of an improper environment, arranges for Bobby to live at the home of Lynne Roberts, his Sunday School teacher, much to the disappointment of Jane Frazee, singing star of the dance hall, who was sincerely fond of the boy. Through Russell Simpson, Lynne's father, Arlen learns that Livingston, greedy for wealth, was exploiting the local miners, and that he (Simpson) could not operate his Big Bonanza mine because of Livingston's threats to the miners. Arlen, disillusioned by his friend's change of character, joins forces with the miners to combat him. Livingston, to rid himself of Arlen's opposition, reveals that he was a fugitive from justice and has him jailed. Bobby, grief-stricken because Arlen had been branded a coward, runs away from home. Hayes helps Arlen to escape from jail to join in the search for Bobby. During the hunt, one of Livingston's henchmen kills Simpson. Bobby, the only witness to the slayer's identity, is found and brought home. Overhearing Livingston's plan to do away with Bobby to prevent him from testifying against his henchman, Jane warns Arlen. The miners, led by Arlen, meet Livingston's gang in a showdown fight and wipe them out. Arlen and Livingston get into a fight to the finish in which Livingston is killed by a falling beam. With law and order restored, Arlen returns to the Army, which clears him of the cowardice charge and gives him a furlough long enough to marry Lynne.

Dorrell and Stuart McGowan and Paul Gangelin wrote the screen play, Eddy White produced it, and George Archainbaud directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Let's Go Steady" with Pat Parrish,  
Jackie Moran and June Preisser**  
(*Columbia, Jan. 4; time, 60 min.*)

A mediocre program comedy with music, produced on a very modest budget. It will probably find its best reception among the "jitterbug" set because of the "jive" music and the "hepcat" dialogue, as well as of the fact that the action revolves around 'teen-aged youngsters. The story, which revolves around the youngsters' aspirations to become popular songwriters, is a thin affair, serving merely as an excuse to introduce the musical numbers. The comedy is pretty weak. Those who are not particularly keen about the

antics of "jitterbugs" will probably find the proceedings pretty dull. Skinnay Ennis and his orchestra furnish the music:—

Jackie Moran and Arnold Stang, aspiring songwriters, come to New York to visit the Saxon Publishing Company, a music firm to which they had paid fifty dollars to publish their song. Arriving at the music firm's office, they find it in an uproar; the owner had died, and his niece, Pat Parrish, who had inherited the business, was trying to explain to a group of irate youngsters that her dead uncle had spent their money but had done nothing about their songs. Sorry for Pat, Moran suggests to the others that they take over the firm on a cooperative basis and publish and plug their songs themselves. All agree. They try to induce Skinnay Ennis, a well-known orchestra leader, to play their songs, but Ennis refuses to deal with them when he learns the name of their firm. Not to be thwarted, the youngsters hit upon the idea of having their songs played by army camp bands throughout the country, hoping that the tunes will become popular with the soldiers. The scheme proves successful and the youngsters' songs soar to popularity. A nation-wide contest for the most popular song by a new composer is instituted, with Skinnay Ennis scheduled to play the winning song on his radio program. Moran's song wins the prize, and he and Pat decide to get married.

Erna Lazurus wrote the screen play, Ted Richmond produced it, and Del Lord directed it. The cast includes Mel Tormé and the Meltones, Jimmy Lloyd and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Grissley's Millions" with Paul Kelly  
and Virginia Grey**

(*Republic, no release date set; time, 72 min.*)

A fairly good program murder-mystery melodrama. It should go over pretty well with the arm-chair detectives, for it keeps one guessing as to the murderer's identity, which is not disclosed until towards the end. Even though the story is far-fetched, and it has a number of implausible situations, it holds one intrigued and keeps one in suspense. It is a serious type of story, with none of the usual stupid detective comedy, which generally detracts from most mystery pictures. The direction and the performances are good:—

Learning that his relations eagerly awaited his death so that they could share his fortune, Robert H. Barrat instructs Don Douglas, his attorney, to revise his will, leaving the money to Virginia Grey, his loyal granddaughter. Virginia, who had left her husband, Paul Fix, a criminal, tended to the old man's needs. She had informed her relatives that Fix was dead. Fix, having learned that Barrat was on his death bed, returns to blackmail Virginia. He is shot dead by Barrat, who then dies himself. Douglas, looking for an opportunity to share Virginia's inheritance, tells her that she will be suspected of killing both men, and suggests that they conceal Fix's body in Barrat's coffin and bury the bodies in a hasty funeral. Meanwhile Paul Kelly, a private detective trailing Fix, had seen him enter Barrat's home but had not seen him leave. He questions Virginia in the belief that she was shielding Fix. When Douglas asks her to marry him under threat of exposure, Virginia confesses the truth to



Kelly, who by this time had fallen in love with her. Meanwhile the police receive an anonymous letter stating that Virginia had poisoned her grandfather. Jealous relatives, seeking to invalidate the will, encourage an investigation. While Barrat's coffin is unearthed and Fix's body discovered, a mysterious assailant tries to murder Virginia, but Kelly saves her life. Arsenic is found in Barrat's body, and suspicion against Virginia is doubled. Kelly, believing her innocent, deduces that the person who had tried to murder her had also poisoned Barrat. Through a clever scheme, in which Virginia cooperates, Kelly succeeds in trapping Elisabeth Risdon, Virginia's aunt, the only relative who had been kind to her. Miss Risdon, in an effort to get her part of the inheritance so that she could send her pretty daughter to Hollywood, had poisoned Barrat. She then tried to murder Virginia so that part of the money would revert to her.

Muriel Guy Bolton wrote the screen play, Walter H. Goetz produced it, and John English directed it. Unobjectionable morally.

### **"She Gets Her Man" with Joan Davis and William Gargan**

(Universal, no release date set; time, 74 min.)

A fairly amusing program comedy, suitable for houses that cater to non-discriminating audiences. Built around a series of mysterious murders that take place in a small town, the story is a hodge-podge of nonsensical action, a good part of it slapstick, in which Joan Davis, as a would-be detective, fumbles her way into the solving of the crimes. Some of the situations are genuinely funny, but most of the comedy is so forced that it fails to arouse much laughter. Joan Davis is the mainstay of the picture, and her antics will undoubtedly amuse her fans. Her current popularity on the radio should be helpful:—

When two leading citizens are murdered mysteriously in the town of Clayton, Donald McBride, the local newspaper editor, sends William Gargan, a reporter, to find Joan Davis, whose deceased mother had been one of the town's famous police chiefs. On her arrival, Joan is appointed special investigator to solve the murders, and Leon Errol, a policeman, is assigned as her assistant. The killer tries to frighten Joan out of town, but Errol shames her into remaining. That night, at a cafe, the Chamber of Commerce president falls dead, a needle in his heart. Joan finds cause to suspect Russell Hicks, the Mayor, but he, too, is murdered in the same manner. Joan's failure as a sleuth disappoints McBride, and he makes arrangements to hire another detective. Meanwhile Errol loses his job because of Joan's bungling. Crushed by this turn of events, Joan is further depressed when she learns that Gargan, with whom she was smitten, was engaged to Vivian Austin, an actress. As Errol bids Joan goodbye at the railroad station, the killer strikes for a fifth time, killing a disreputable stage play producer. Joan, seeing Vivian snatch a piece of paper out of the dead man's pocket, follows her to the victim's theatre. While she and Errol search the theatre for clues, they are attacked by a gang of roughnecks. Joan escapes and, by a series of antics, infuriates a number of citizens who pursue her back into the theatre, where they get into a free-for-all fight with the gangsters. During the battle, Joan recovers the paper filched by Vivian and, through it, tracks down the town coroner as the murderer; he and the dead pro-

ducer had worked together on shady deals. Errol is restored to the force with honors, and as Joan prepares to leave, she receives a telegram from her home town begging her to remain in Clayton.

Warren Wilson and Clyde Bruckman wrote the screen play, Mr. Wilson produced it, and Erle C. Kenton directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Mr. Emmanuel" with Felix Aylmer and Greta Gynt**

(United Artists, Jan. 19; time, 92 min.)

Based on Louis Golding's successful novel, "Mag-nolia Street," this British-made melodrama is one of the better pictures to have come out of England. The strength of the picture lies, not so much in the story, which to many may seem outdated (the action occurs in 1935) and somewhat implausible, as in the excellent performance by Felix Aylmer, as "Mr. Emmanuel," who gives a convincing and sensitive portrayal of an elderly, humble Jew, who stout-heartedly defies the bestiality of the Nazis in his determination to find the missing mother of a German refugee boy. The story unfolds at a slow pace, but it has deep human interest, and its dramatic impact is very forceful. Some of the situations stir one deeply. In view of the fact that the players are unknown to American audiences, the picture will undoubtedly require extensive exploitation to put it over. The popularity of the book, however, may prove helpful:—

Aylmer, a retired Jewish widower in England, helping to look after a group of German refugee boys, is touched by the grieving of Peter Mullins, the youngest boy, who attempts to commit suicide when he fails to receive letters from his mother in Germany. The boy's father, a non-Aryan, had been murdered, and he feared for his mother's safety. To keep the boy from destroying himself, Aylmer promises to go to Germany to learn what happened to his mother. Despite his friends' pleas to remain in England, Aylmer departs for Berlin, secure in the thought that his British passport would protect him. In Berlin, his quest for information about Peter's mother proves fruitless; those who could give him information dared not. The Gestapo, considerably annoyed by Aylmer's persistent search, arrest and falsely charge him with the assassination of a Nazi official. Because he was held on a criminal, not political, charge, his British passport could not help him. Tortured daily by the Gestapo, which sought to force a "confession" from him, Aylmer steadfastly refuses to admit to the assassination. Meanwhile Greta Gynt, daughter of an old Jewish friend and a popular night-club star in Berlin, becomes concerned about the old man's plight; she uses her influence with Reichminister Walter Rilla, her lover, to gain Aylmer's release. Given a few hours to clear out of the country, Aylmer informs Greta that he would rather die than not fulfill his promise to Peter. Through her, Aylmer learns that Peter's mother had married a Nazi official and, lest she be persecuted, she refused to acknowledge her half-Jewish son. Aylmer returns to England and informs Peter that his mother had "died" nobly.

Louis Golding and Gordon Wellesley wrote the screen play, William Siström produced it, and Harold French directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

French films in American theatres regardless of whether or not the American public understands the French language. Or, perhaps, the representative of the French Government had in mind dubbing the French pictures in English. In other words, the French Government feels that the American public should regress in progress and go back to the horse-and-buggy days. For that is what would happen if the American exhibitors should exhibit, in regular theatres, foreign pictures dubbed in English.

Even little Switzerland, with a population of four million, which cannot support film production at home, wants us to import as many Swiss films as the number of American films we are exporting to Switzerland.

In the case of Argentina, there was a time when we were depriving the American producers of raw stock in order for us to help the Argentinean producers, but now that has stopped.

There is only one way by which this matter can be settled without any fight; after the war, Great Britain, France, Spain and other nations throughout the world will need our help to rebuild their countries from the ravages of this war. The American Government, then, should point out to all the nations that are placing restrictions on the American films that we shall lend our greater aid to such nations as do not place restrictions on American commerce.

### LET US SPARE THE PUBLIC'S FEELINGS

Because this a tough, dirty war, it is understandable and desirable that war melodramas should be grim so that they can reflect to the civilians at home the fact that we are in a do-or-die fight that calls for the greatest of sacrifices for each one of us. In other words, there is no room for "sissy" stuff in war pictures.

Battle scenes that depict the injuring and killing of fighting men add a realistic touch to war pictures and give them the desired dramatic and inspirational effect. It is the type of action audiences expect to see in such pictures, and consequently, they find these scenes acceptable, though brutal.

There is, however, another sort of realism that war pictures can do without. I refer to scenes that go into minute detail in their depiction of fighting men suffering in mind and in body. These scenes, though highly dramatic, cannot be classed as entertainment, for they serve only to add to the mental stress that most movie-goers are undergoing in these troublesome days. The state of mind of today's motion picture audience, which, for the greatest part, is made up of parents, wives, sweethearts, and relatives of the men in the armed forces, is not such as to permit them to gaze stoically at scenes depicting the suffering of a fighting man.

To most picture-goers today, the fighting hero they see on the screen is representative of their own loved ones. Consequently, when they see that hero undergoing excruciating mental or physical pain, his sufferings serve only to torture further their over-troubled minds, for they cannot help but think that their loved ones, too, may suffer a similar fate.

That the public is in no mood to accept scenes depicting a fighting man's sufferings has apparently been recognized by MGM, and it is to its credit that it has done something about the condition. In "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo," a fine war melodrama

based on the factual account of Captain Ted Lawson's experiences as a participant in the Doolittle raid on Tokyo, over-emphasis was placed on the scenes dealing with the amputation of one of Lawson's legs. So realistic were the scenes depicting his mental and physical suffering, and the operation in which his leg was amputated, that, I am sure, many persons left the theatre with grief-laden hearts, saddened by the thought that a similar experience might befall their loved ones on the fighting fronts.

In these times in particular, the loss of limbs, operation scenes, and other incidents that depict in detail the suffering of a fighting man should be kept out of war pictures because of the adverse effect they have on the public's morale. In the case of "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo," however, the producers had no choice in the matter since such scenes were a part of the factual account. Where the producers did err, however, was in the over-emphasis given to these scenes. MGM, having realized this error, and being considerate of the public's feelings, has wisely eliminated certain scenes so that the part of the picture dealing with the loss of Captain Lawson's leg has been toned down considerably.

The mounting casualties suffered by the Allies in past month has caused considerable concern to those with loved ones in the services, and the undue depiction of a serviceman's suffering causes them no end of distress. This state of public mind places a greater responsibility than ever on those who select story material for war pictures; their judgment will determine whether or not the picture-goer is to obtain relaxation, which, after all, is what he seeks when he attends the movies.

Sending people out of a theatre in an unhappy frame of mind helps neither their morale nor the theatre attendance.

### CONCLUSIVE VICTORY!

Like a drowning man seeking to save himself as he goes down for the third time, the Crescent Amusement Company, in a final effort to upset the Government's sweeping victory in its anti-trust suit against it, filed a petition with the U. S. Supreme Court on Friday, January 5, asking for a rehearing of its appeal, which the Court decided last month in favor of the Government.

On Monday, January 8, the Court, without any formal opinion, rejected the petition for a rehearing, thus bringing the case to a definite close.

The Government's victory is now conclusive. It marks a milestone in the independent exhibitor's fight for the preservation of his right of free competition.

### THE MARCH OF DIMES

Once again the industry looks to the nation's exhibitors to raise funds that will help those who have been stricken with infantile paralysis.

A goal of \$5,000,000 has been set.

As we go to press, the motion picture committee in charge of the drive reports that 10,000 theatres have already sent in their pledges for the collection campaign, which takes place during the week of January 25-31.

HARRISON'S REPORTS urges those who have not yet sent in their pledge to do so at once; no cause is more worthy of support.



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Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 1945

No. 3

### The Exhibitor, Too, Has An Equity In Raw Film Stock

The War Production Board's notification to the industry that it will receive approximately thirty million feet less raw film stock during the first quarter of 1945 than it received in the last quarter of 1944 is causing considerable concern to all branches of the industry, for the new cut will undoubtedly aggravate the already serious handicap under which they are operating.

The suggestions for saving raw stock are many. They include, among others, eliminating so-called "B" pictures; reducing the length of important pictures so that their running time will be limited to ninety or one hundred minutes; curtailing, if not eliminating, the production of short subjects; greater use of short subjects as a replacement for second features; reducing further the number of feature prints in circulation; cutting down the length of newsreels; and tightening up on the waste in production by limiting the number of "takes" for each scene.

According to some industry observers, this latest reduction in the raw stock allotment, if continued on the same basis for the other three quarters in 1945, may result in about thirty to forty-five fewer features being released during the year than were released in 1944. Fewer feature pictures would, of course, add considerably to the difficulties the exhibitors are already experiencing as a result of the limited supply of prints, and of the artificial product shortage, which has been brought about by extended runs and moveovers. And the subsequent-run exhibitors, whom these conditions affect most seriously, will probably have to contend with many more problems than they now have to solve.

An interesting angle, one that requires close study by exhibition circles, is the current method by which the WPB allocates to the industry its share of raw film stock produced in this country. The stock is allocated directly to the eleven distributors—without restrictions as to its use. It is entirely up to them to work out their own problems regarding the number of feet they will need for their production schedules, and the number of feet that they will require for release prints. They have the right to dispose of their film allotment in any manner they see fit. They alone determine how much of it shall go into the negatives, how much into release prints of current pictures, how much into prints of reissue negatives and how much into prints for the foreign market.

Independent producers, such as Samuel Goldwyn, International Pictures, and those who release through United Artists, obtain their raw stock requirements from the distributors with whom they have releasing deals. This method of raw stock allocation is causing considerable concern to some independent producers; they are experiencing difficulties in obtaining release deals with some of the major distributors. These distributors are reluctant to deplete their share of raw stock, for it would require that they curb their own production plans in order to accommodate independent producers from whom they can earn no more than a distribution fee. The raw stock they allocate to an independent

producer would not, in these days, give the distributors as much profit per foot as would the stock used on their own productions.

The independent producers, however, have a right to remain in business and to make pictures. To do this, they must have raw stock. Thus it is evident that they have an equity in the raw stock rationed to the industry and, because of their protests, it is assumed that an equitable arrangement will be worked out with the WPB when it meets in Washington with the Industry Advisory Committee on Raw Stock this coming February 1.

And what about the exhibitors? They, too, have an equity in the available raw stock, for their interests are affected directly and vitally by the manner in which it is used by the producer-distributors. What assurances are there that the stock will be used in a manner that, so far as possible, will be beneficial not only to the distributors, but also to the exhibitors? Absolutely none!

Under the present system of film rationing, there is nothing, as said before, to prevent the distributors from disposing of this stock in any way that suits their purpose. They can, for example, reduce still further the number of positive prints they will make for each picture, and then use the stock thus saved for new productions that will only add to their already huge backlog of productions now reposing in their vaults. Such a move would serve to aggravate the conditions under which the exhibitors are now operating their theatres, and it would serve also to perpetuate the "seller's" market, in which the producer-distributors are having the time of their lives.

With the present print supply scarcely enough to take care of the exhibitors' needs, the producer-distributors have made and are still making the most of their opportunity. Rental terms, along with the demands for extended and preferred playing time, are way out of line. The situation as to both the shortage of prints and the excessive rental demands has become so acute that many exhibitors have turned to reissues for relief. But this avenue of escape, too, has been blocked by the distributors, who, cognizant of the possible profits on reissues in a tight market, are demanding fantastic rental terms, percentage in some cases. The reissue field has now been turned into a profitable sideline—for the distributors. The exhibitor, desperate for product, pays through the nose. As a matter of fact, the reissue business has become so profitable that, on a number of old pictures, thousands of feet of rationed raw stock have been used for the making of new prints. Using rationed stock to make new prints of old pictures, which many exhibitors do not care to re-book, is a flagrant abuse of the exhibitors' equity in the stock, for its use in that manner deprives many of them of badly needed prints on new features.

The lack of regulations controlling the distributors' use of raw stock brings up the very pertinent question of how they might use this stock to further their interests in foreign

(Continued on last page)

### **"The Great Flamarion" with Erich Von Stroheim and Mary Beth Hughes**

(Republic, no release date set; time, 78 min.)

Those who enjoy lurid, heavy-handed melodramas should find "The Great Flamarion" to their liking. It is strictly adult entertainment; the story is too unpleasant and sordid for children. The heroine is shown as an immoral, double-dealing woman, who makes love to her employer and persuades him to kill her husband, an inveterate drunkard, so that she could run off with another lover. Not one of these characters do anything to arouse the spectator's sympathy. The performances are good and the production values are better than average, but the picture does not rise above the level of program fare:—

Erich Von Stroheim, expert pistol shot in a vaudeville act, falls madly in love with Mary Beth Hughes, who, together with Dan Duryea, her husband, worked with Von Stroheim in the act. Infatuated with a fellow-vaudevillian, and unable to secure a divorce from her husband, Mary sees in Von Stroheim's love a means of solving her problem. She persuades him to murder Duryea during a performance, making it appear as if the shooting had been an unavoidable accident. The scheme works according to plan when the coroner exonerates Von Stroheim of responsibility. To avoid suspicion, Mary and Von Stroheim go their separate ways, agreeing to meet in Chicago on a specified date to be married. When Mary fails to show up on the appointed day, Von Stroheim realizes that she had double-crossed him. Determined to find her, Von Stroheim searches in vain for a clue to her whereabouts and, after many months, penniless and broken in spirit, he finds Mary and her new husband performing in a small Mexico City theatre. Cornered in her dressing room, Mary tries to vamp Von Stroheim, but when she senses his intentions, she snatches his gun and shoots him. He strangles her to death and, later, dies himself.

Anne Wigton, Heinz Herald, and Richard Weil wrote the screen play, William Wilder produced it, and Anthony Mann directed it.

### **"Hangover Square" with Laird Cregar, Linda Darnell and George Sanders**

(20th Century-Fox; February; time, 77 min.)

A strong murder melodrama, capably directed and acted; it holds one's attention throughout, in spite of the fact that there is no mystery attached to the crimes. The action revolves around a mild-mannered London composer, whose split personality drives him to murder whenever he suffers a lapse of memory. The late Laird Cregar, as the composer, makes a very tragic figure, and one cannot help but feel sympathetic towards him. It is indeed ironical that in this, his last picture, Cregar dies in the final scene. One sequence that may prove too strong for sensitive stomachs is the one in which Cregar, maddened by the infidelity of Linda Darnell, a hard-boiled cabaret entertainer, murders her and then burns her body. London's gas-light era, which serves as the setting, gives the proceedings an effective eerie atmosphere. The picture's gruesomeness makes it unsuitable for children:—

Cregar, after killing a store merchant during one of his mental lapses, does not regain his memory until

he returns to his apartment. Noticing blood on his coat sleeve, Cregar becomes disturbed when he learns of the merchant's death. He visits George Sanders, a Scotland Yard psychiatrist, and expresses his fears that he might have killed the man unknowingly. After an investigation, Sanders exonerates Cregar, proving that the blood on his sleeve was his own. Delighted, Cregar goes to a pub for a drink. There he meets Linda Darnell, a sultry cabaret singer. In a gay mood, Cregar plays a melodious tune that catches Linda's fancy. Linda, realizing that Cregar's music would be helpful in the furtherance of her career, craftily entices him. He becomes so infatuated with her that he neglects to work on his Concerto, which he was writing for Faye Marlowe, his fiancée, whose father, Alan Napier, was a famed conductor. Eventually, Cregar realizes that Linda was playing him for a fool. Aggravated and suffering another one of his mental lapses, he murders her and throws her body on a huge fire celebrating Guy Fawkes Day. His mind back to normal, Cregar, unaware of his second murder, works earnestly on the completion of his Concerto. Meanwhile Sanders, investigating Linda's disappearance, discovers evidence proving Cregar's guilt. Cregar accepts the evidence as conclusive, but eludes Sanders in order to hear Napier conduct his Concerto. When Sanders appears at the concert, Cregar, emotionally upset, overturns an oil lamp and starts a fire. He fights off efforts to save him, perishing in the blaze.

Barre Lyndon wrote the screen play, Robert Bassler produced it, and John Brahm directed it.

### **"The Big Show-off" with Arthur Lake and Dale Evans**

(Republic, Jan. 22; time, 70 min.)

Just a moderately entertaining romantic comedy with some music, suitable as the second half of a double feature program. Based on the deception theme, the story is a far-fetched and at times silly affair, which is developed in so obvious a fashion that one becomes weary by the time the picture is half finished. In its favor are a few pleasant production numbers and Dale Evans' singing, but these musical interludes are not strong enough to carry the picture. Arthur Lake, as Miss Dale's befuddled suitor, is cast in a role suited to his particular talents. His antics, however, are quite familiar. The wrestling sequences, in which the combatants poke fun at the art, are quite amusing. Anson Weeks and his Orchestra furnish the music:—

Lake, a pianist, in Lionel Standar's night-club, is too bashful to declare his love for Dale Evans, the club's singer, and too gentle to fight with George Meeker, his obtrusive rival for her love. Stander, to help Lake, tells Dale that the young man was really the Devil (Paul Hurst), a masked wrestler. Pleased to learn that Lake was not really a "Casper Milquetoast," Dale becomes interested in him, but she dislikes "his" vicious disposition as a wrestler and pleads with him to abandon the ring. Lake, however, finds himself compelled to continue the deception as long as the Devil appears in the ring. At the arena one night, Dale, believing that she was watching Lake, hears the Devil announce his engagement to another girl. Lake, realizing that the hoax had gone too far, tries to explain, but Dale refuses to listen. Matters become complicated



when the police, seeking to arrest the Devil on an assault and battery charge, are informed by Meeker that Lake was the masked wrestler. And to make matters worse, the Devil's manager, who had never seen his wrestler unmasked, also identifies Lake as their man. The police urge Lake to confess, but the Devil's manager warns him to admit to nothing lest he be barred from the ring. Seeing an opportunity to get himself out of a predicament, Lake confesses to the charge. Dale, assured that Lake was through with wrestling, agrees to marry him.

Leslie Vadnay and Richard Weil wrote the screen play, Sydney M. Williams produced it, and Howard Bretherton directed it. Claude S. Spence was associate producer. The cast includes Emmet Lynne, Marjorie Manners, Sammy Stein and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Eadie Was a Lady" with Ann Miller and William Wright**

(Columbia, January 18; time, 67 min.)

A fair program comedy, the sort that may appeal to audiences that are not too exacting in their demands. Like most pictures of this type, this one suffers from an inconsequential script; but it serves well enough as a means of putting the production numbers and the comedy across. Ann Miller sings a few songs well, but she is at her best when dancing. As a matter of fact, she does more dancing in this picture than she has done in her last few pictures. Most of the comedy falls flat because it is forced, but Joe Besser manages to get several laughs by his customary antics. One production number, in which classical and "jitterbug" dancing are combined, is both novel and amusing:—

Ann, who lived with her socialite aunt in Boston, and who attended exclusive Glen Moor College during the day, furthers her theatrical ambitions by working secretly in the evenings as a chorus girl in William Wright's burlesque show. Wright, unaware of Ann's family background, singles her out for a leading part in the show, and, through a ruse, manages to rid himself of Marion Martin, the show's leading lady, so that Ann could replace her. Ann makes a hit with the audience, but, lest she become a noted star and her double life be found out, she quits burlesque. As a result, Wright's show closes. Through Joe Besser, a former vaudevillian, who taught classical dancing at the college, Wright locates Ann and induces her to appear in a private show at an alumni dinner. Marion, seeking revenge on Wright, informs the police that an obscene performance was taking place at the dinner. A raid takes place and among those arrested are Ann and the college Dean, who had been present at the event. When the college board of directors assemble to take action against Ann and the Dean, Wright, posing as the head of the Athens Art Theatre, explains that Ann had appeared in burlesque at his request to gather material to be used in the college's annual Greek Festival. With the Dean and herself cleared, Ann looks forward to a happy future with Wright.

Monte Brice wrote the screen play, Michel Kraike produced it, and Arthur Dreifuss directed it. The cast includes Jeff Donnell, Tom Dugan and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"A Song to Remember" with Paul Muni, Merle Oberon and Cornel Wilde**

(Columbia, no release date set; time, 113 min.)

This romantic drama, based on the life of Frederic Chopin, the famous composer, and set to his inspiring classical music, is a finely produced picture. Class audiences, and music lovers in particular, should find it very satisfying. As for its reception by the rank and file, its chances are fairly good, for Chopin's music is melodious, the story, though highly fictionalized, has considerable human interest, and the performances by the capable cast are excellent. Moreover, the settings of the 19th century period are magnificent, and the Technicolor photography is a treat to the eye. While no official credit is given, the superb piano playing that accompanies the action is said to be the work of Jose Iturbi, eminent pianist. Most of the human interest is awakened by Paul Muni, as Chopin's music teacher; his unfailing devotion to his pupil, despite the composer's maltreatment of him, is at times quite pathetic. Cornel Wilde, as Chopin, is convincing, as is his piano playing of the composer's works. Merle Oberon, as George Sand, the eccentric woman novelist with whom Chopin becomes infatuated and for whom he detaches himself from his friends and ideals, has a most unsympathetic part, but she plays it very effectively. The affair between them has been handled with delicacy:—

Recognizing the musical genius of Chopin as a youth, Joseph Elsner (Paul Muni) dreams of the day the boy will give a concert in Paris. It is not until Chopin's twenty-second birthday, when he is forced to flee Poland because of his involvement with revolutionists, that Elsner is able to take him to Paris. There, Elsner brings the young man to Louis Pleyel (George Coulouris), an important impresario, and tries to arrange a concert. Pleyel rejects the request, but Franz Lizst (Stephen Bekassy), visiting Pleyel's office, recognizes Chopin's talents and induces the impresario to reconsider. Through Lizst, Chopin meets George Sand, who helps him to establish a reputation in Paris. Chopin becomes infatuated with George and, against Elsner's wishes, accompanies her to Majorca. Under her influence, Chopin detaches himself completely from Elsner. The old man, impoverished, once again teaches piano pupils. Wearying of Majorca, Chopin returns to Paris but deliberately avoids meeting Elsner. Eventually, Elsner reminds Chopin of his pledge to contribute to Poland's liberation. Ashamed, Chopin breaks his relationship with George and, despite his ill health, arranges for a European concert tour to raise funds for his oppressed countrymen. The strain, however, proves too great for his frail body. On his death bed, he asks Elsner to bring George to him, but the strong-willed woman refuses his wish. Chopin dies, surrounded by his friends.

Sidney Buchman wrote the screen play and collaborated with Louis F. Edelman in its production. Charles Vidor directed it. The cast includes Nina Foch, Sig Arno, Howard Freeman, Maurice Tauzin and others.

### **"The Big Bonanza" with Richard Arlen, Jane Frazee and Robert Livingston**

(Republic, Dec. 30; time, 69 min.)

In the review that was printed last week, this picture was erroneously listed as "The Great Bonanza."

markets. As most of you undoubtedly know, the British motion picture industry, as well as the French, Russian, and Mexican industries, are gearing themselves to give the American distributors a battle for control of the world's different film markets. It is indeed desirable that the American distributors gain control of the foreign markets, for, to retain this control, they will have to produce good pictures. And when better pictures are made, the American exhibitors stand to benefit.

In normal times, the important world markets had available facilities and sufficient raw stock to make prints locally from the lavender prints delivered by the American distributors. Today, however, particularly in liberated countries, where such facilities are probably extinct, the American distributors, in order to secure a firm foothold in a particular market, may have to deliver their own release prints.

Since no separate raw stock allocation is made to the distributors for use in foreign markets, they would naturally have to draw footage from their regular quarterly supply. This, of course, would serve only to make more burdensome the conditions under which American exhibition is functioning. HARRISON'S REPORTS, as already said, is highly in favor of the American distributors' domination of the world's film markets, but it does not feel that this domination should be attained at the expense of the American exhibitor.

The situation calls for action on the part of the distributors. One way by which they may solve this problem is for them to convince the Government of the important role that American films play in the extension of American ideals in foreign countries. They should point out to the Government that, more so than any other medium, American pictures create for the people of foreign countries a better understanding of what we in the United States are like. And they might add that American films have been and still are a great influence for the expansion of American commerce. With the Government thus convinced, the distributors may be able to work out an arrangement whereby they could carry on their work in foreign fields without dislocating the American market.

It can readily be seen from what has been said here that the method by which the WPB allocates raw stock to the industry is in need of revision. The distributors, with no regulations to control their disposition of the rationed stock, are in a position to continue using the stock in a manner that betters their own interests at the expense of the exhibitors. Unless the independent exhibitor organizations take steps to apprise the War Production Board of exhibition's equity in raw stock, and unless they seek regulations to control the disposition of the stock by the distributors, the hold the distributors now have on an exhibitor's operations may become much more severe.

The problem is a complicated one, and its solution will require close study. The Industry Advisory Committee on Raw Stock would seem to be the logical body to conduct such a study, but thus far the Committee is composed solely of distributor representatives. This Committee should be expanded to include representation for both the independent producers and the exhibitors, so that the WPB, in allocating raw stock to the industry, would be made aware of their equity in the stock. Perhaps, then, rules and regulations will be formulated to protect that equity.

## AGAIN ABOUT PRODUCTION WASTE

Terry Ramsaye, edition of *Motion Picture Herald*, made the following remarks in the December 30 issue of that paper regarding this paper's three articles on production

waste, which articles were published in the issues of September 9, 16 and 23:

"Something to get militant about is an essential of the operation of Mr. Pete Harrison's publishing policy, and these days he has to do a bit of looking about to find it. So it comes that he has recently had a spell of indignation over what he considers 'studio waste.' It seems to boil down to discussion of footage which is left on the cutting room floor. One suspects that arrangements to closely limit or eliminate that would prove decidedly expensive to the product. Production of pictures has not yet, and never will, reach the precision of pouring a casting. The pouring of the picture into scenes on film is quite as creative a process as the making of the alloys in the melting pot. No great work of words on paper was ever achieved without revisions after it had been made visual.

"A set of figures comes back to memory. They pertain to Mr. Charles Chaplin's famous Lone Star two-reel comedies, a line of product which may in fact represent the highest final gross per negative foot in the annals of the art. Typical was 'Easy Street.' About 115,000 feet of negative was made, to get a final 1,650, less titles. It was about five weeks on the stage, at a cost of about \$100,000 of which about \$60,000 was Mr. Chaplin's salary. He left about 114,000 feet of negative on the cutting room floor. It was part of his process of production—and that was not waste. Competitors were making two-reelers out of ten to twenty thousand feet of negative, and you cannot remember who they were. . . ."

In citing Mr. Chaplin's comedies, particularly "Easy Street," my friend Terry Ramsaye has made one mistake—he has attributed the drawing powers of those comedies to the liberal use of negative raw stock. Would "Easy Street" have grossed what it did gross without Mr. Chaplin, even if the negative used were 250,000 feet instead of 115,000?

In those articles on production waste, this writer condemned, not the use of negative stock to make a scene perfect, but the wanton waste that a little careful preparation might have avoided. His facts about this waste were obtained from reliable executives—men who were writhing with agony watching negative stock wasted.

Can Mr. Ramsaye justify the use of 600,000 feet of negative stock on a picture the length of which will not, I am sure, exceed when it is finally edited two hours of running time? The picture in question has not yet been finished even though nearly six months have been spent in cutting it, and the Saints themselves don't know whether anything would come out of it no matter how many film editors work on it to make it presentable.

In bringing the matter of film waste into the open, this writer feels, as he stated once before, that he has contributed a great share in the elimination of waste. Those who are responsible for such waste know that the eyes of the industry are upon them. They will have to reform, not at some time in the future, but now, for unless the war in Europe should end quickly, a hope that seems unlikely to be fulfilled soon, there will be less film for the production needs: the Government will continue to reduce the industry's allotment, and every foot of film will be needed to carry on production.

A readjustment is necessary now also for another reason: as this paper has stated in these columns before, the lush times that are prevailing now will not prevail long after hostilities end, and at the present cost rate, either the pictures will fail to bring back the investment, or the quality will suffer. In either case, the industry will suffer.

I was told recently by the president of one of the biggest companies in the business that, on pictures that cost more than one million dollars, at least \$300,000 can be saved on each picture with proper economy. These are not my figures—they are the figures of some one who foots the bill.



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1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 1945

No. 4

## A CALL TO ACTION

In his annual report to the Board of Directors of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors, at its meeting in Columbus, Ohio, this week, Mr. Abram F. Myers, Chairman of the Board and General Counsel, made these significant remarks in regard to the recent cut in raw stock allocated to the industry by the WPB:

"There is no telling how much, if at all, the order of the War Production Board . . . will in itself affect the supply of feature pictures available to exhibitors. The trend towards curtailment of feature pictures has been in full swing for five years. Last season the Big Eight released a total of only 259 and it has been predicted that even fewer would be released this season. The main vice of the W.P.B. order is that it affords justification for and lends respectability to a policy of the major companies that is proving disastrous to subsequent-run exhibitors. The producers, if they wished to be fair, could absorb all or a large part of the loss in footage by eliminating waste at the studios, by reducing senseless screen credits, and especially by reducing the length of the now over-long feature pictures. But they probably will prefer simply to reduce the number of pictures released and thereby tighten their control of the film market."

Stating that abnormal conditions have enabled the producer-distributors "year after year to increase their net profits while at the same time reducing the volume of their output," Mr. Myers points out that they can now attribute their curtailment of output to the Government's reduction in raw stock allotments and, for the time being, silence criticism. Mr. Myers then urges the exhibitors to oppose in every possible way, through their organizations, the efforts of the producer-distributors to take advantage of the situation. He stresses the need for a greater degree of teamwork among the exhibitors than has heretofore prevailed and, in particular, cautions against the rejection without investigation or consideration of the ideas submitted by exhibitors in different territories as to how best to meet the menace of increasing film rentals. "The danger to the independent exhibitors has become so great," says Mr. Myers, "that the exhibitors—and especially the leaders of exhibitors—should welcome all means of resisting it." "As a matter of self preservation," adds Mr. Myers, "independent exhibitors everywhere must intensify their efforts to hold down film rentals."

In stating that "the main vice of the W.P.B. order is that it affords justification for and lends respectability to a policy of the major companies that is proving disastrous to subsequent-run exhibitors," Mr. Myers has indeed aptly described an existing condition that is deplorable. And his suggestions of what the producer-distributors should do to cut down the loss in footage, and his assumption that they will prefer to reduce the number of pictures released so as to tighten their control of the market, are sound, as is his recommendation that the exhibitors combat the distributors by intensifying their efforts to hold down film rentals. This last recommendation is a most important one, for the exhibitors' efforts along these lines can never be too great.

There is, however, still another way to combat this deplorable condition, and that is to attack and destroy the foundation on which it is built. And that foundation is the method employed by the War Production Board in allocating raw film stock to the industry.

As this paper pointed out in last week's editorial, the raw stock allocated to the industry by the WPB is given directly to the producer-distributors, who are not bound by any rules or regulations as to its disposition. Since the WPB does not concern itself with the manner in which the producer-distributors dispose of the stock, to them is left the working out of how much footage shall be used for positive prints of new features, how much for production work at the studios, how much to fill their needs in foreign markets, and how much for new prints of old pictures that are reissued.

Under such a system of raw film stock disposition, the producer-distributors, unhampered by regulatory restrictions, have been and still are disposing of their stock quotas in a manner designed to perpetuate what is known as a "sellers' market."

One example of how this system affects the interests of the exhibitors is the situation the distributors are up against in Mexico. That country's motion picture producers, upon being notified that there will be a reduction in the quantity of raw stock available to them from this country for the first two quarters of 1945, became alarmed lest the reduction interfere with their elaborate plans to boost production this year. To alleviate the condition for local producers, Mexican officials have ordered that no raw stock allocated to Mexico shall be used for the dubbing into Spanish of pictures produced in foreign countries. This order, of course, affects the American distributors mainly, and it will now be necessary for them to send their own stock to Mexico whenever dubbing is to be done there.

Ordinarily, this situation would be of no concern to American exhibitors. However, under the present method of raw stock allocation—a method that permits the producer-distributors to draw from their regular quarterly allotments whatever footage they need to protect and to further their interests, not only in Mexico but also in other foreign lands, the situation becomes one of primary concern to the American exhibitors, for every foot of raw stock that is withdrawn from the already tight film market in this country serves only to aggravate the existing handicaps under which they are operating.

The distributors' use of raw stock for foreign markets is, however, only one example of how the present system of stock allocation can be used to their advantage at the expense of the home exhibitors. Among other advantages, the system affords them an opportunity to control the number of release prints in circulation and, as Mr. Myers pointed out, enables them to tighten their control of the film market. By merely maintaining a shortage of prints of new features, they

(Continued on last page)

### **"Thoroughbreds" with Tom Neal and Adele Mara**

(*Republic, Dec. 23; time, 55 min.*)

A moderately entertaining program melodrama, suitable for neighborhood and small-town theatres. The story, which revolves around a young cavalry officer's devotion for his horse, is a familiar one, and it offers no new angles, but it has been told in a pleasant way. Moreover, it has some human interest as well as a few horse-racing thrills. The closing scenes are fairly exciting even though they depict the usual ending—the hero's horse winning the big race. The love interest is mild but pleasing:—

Tom Neal, a sergeant in the Cavalry, is given a medical discharge just as orders arrive to mechanize the Cavalry and to sell the horses at public auction. Eager to own Sireson, his Cavalry horse, Neal bids for the animal at the auction but is outbid by Adele Mara, socialite fiancée of Gene Garrick, his barracks-mate. A feeling of antagonism springs up between Adele and Neal, but Paul Harvey, Adele's father, who liked the young man, offers him a half interest in Sireson if he would train the horse to run in the Brookside Sweepstakes against Princess, Adele's favorite mount. Neal accepts the offer. When an injury forces Princess out of the race, Adele and Neal are drawn closer together in a mutual determination to see Sireson win the race. On the eve of the event, Garrick, who was visiting Adele on furlough, overhears Roger Pryor, a gambler, offer Neal money to lose the race. Unaware that Neal had rejected the offer, Garrick becomes suspicious. A series of other incidents increase his suspicions and, ten minutes before post time, Garrick accuses Neal of trying to doublecross Adele and demands to ride Sireson himself. Neal, to protect Sireson's chances, reluctantly knocks his friend unconscious and rides the horse to victory. Sincerely sorry that he had misjudged his friend, and aware of the fact that he and Adele were in love, Garrick gives them his blessing and gallantly bows out of their lives.

Wellyn Totman wrote the screen play, Lester Sharpe produced it, and George Blair directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Objective Burma" with Errol Flynn**

(*Warner Bros., February 17; time, 142 min.*)

Very good! It ranks with the best of the war melodramas yet produced. From the moment a group of American paratroopers are dropped behind the Japanese lines in Burma, to destroy a radar station, until they work their way back to their home base, the spectator is kept on the edge of his seat. The action is fraught with suspense throughout as the men, stalked by Japanese patrols, fight their way through jungles and swamp lands against overwhelming odds and despite extreme hardships suffered during days of gruelling, exhausting marches. The encounters between the Americans and the Japs are, not only highly exciting, but also extremely informative, for the methods employed for both attack and defense are shown in great detail. What impresses one is the expertness with which the producer has depicted the jungle scenes; they are so realistic that one feels as if he were in Burma. Errol Flynn, as the Captain in charge of the men, makes a plausible leader. One admires his resourcefulness in leading his men to safety,

as well as his sympathetic understanding of their hopelessness. While the action holds one's interest all the way through, a cut of ten to fifteen minutes in the running time would not affect its dramatic punch. There is no romantic interest, and the cast is all-male.

In the development of the story, Flynn and a group of fifty paratroopers are dropped 180 miles behind the Jap lines to destroy a secret radar station. After wiping out the garrison and demolishing the station, the men head for an abandoned airfield for a rendezvous with their transport planes. Jap patrols, searching for the invaders, make it inadvisable for the planes to land. Flynn radios the pilots to meet the men at another rendezvous two days later. Dividing his men in two columns, Flynn arranges for them to travel separate ways but to meet at the designated spot in two days. Flynn's column reaches the rendezvous without incident, but the other column is waylaid by the Japs and wiped out. A supply plane, flying over the rendezvous, radios Flynn that there are no available landing fields and that he and his men must walk out through 150 miles of Jap-infested jungle. After days of gruelling marches and countless skirmishes, Flynn receives orders from the supply plane to change course and travel away from the home base to a designated hilltop. The men, stunned by these strange orders, doggedly obey and fight their way to the spot. There, after an all-night battle with the Japs, which reduces their ranks to only eleven survivors, they see thousands of parachutes billow the air as the Allies begin their invasion of Burma.

Among those playing principal roles are Henry Hull, as a middle-aged newspaper reporter who fails to survive the ordeal; George Tobias, as a talkative paratrooper; and William Prince, as Flynn's second in command.

Ronald MacDougall and Lester Cole wrote the screen play, Jerry Wald produced it, and Raoul Walsh directed it. The cast includes James Brown, Dick Erdman, Warner Anderson and others.

### **"The Jade Mask" with Sidney Toler**

(*Monogram, Jan. 26; time, 66 min.*)

Average program fare. It is another in the "Charlie Chan" series of murder mystery melodramas with comedy, and on about the same entertainment level as the other pictures. The story and treatment adhere to the series' formula, with "Chan," played by Sidney Toler, called in to solve the mystery. As in the other pictures, the comedy is provoked by "Chan's" son (Edwin Luke) and by his colored valet (Manton Moreland), who alternate at helping and hindering him in the solving of the crime. Since several persons are suspected, each having had a motive for murdering the victim, one's interest is held fairly well. The manner in which the murderer is finally exposed is far-fetched to the extreme, but it will probably satisfy the non-discriminating followers of the series:—

Chan, investigating the murder of Frank Reicher, a scientist, who had been working on a secret formula, questions Hardie Albright, the scientist's assistant; Edith Evanson, his sister; Janet Warren, his niece; Dorothy Granger, his housekeeper; and Cyril Deleranti, his butler. All lived in the scientist's mysterious home, and each had an apparent grievance against him. Unknown to Chan, Janet's boy-friend, a police-



man, had tried to visit her on the eve of the murder but he had been killed by Jack Ingram, who donned his uniform and gained access to the house in order to steal the formula. When the butler is found murdered, and when the housekeeper is rescued from a gas-filled chamber that housed the secret formula, Chan discovers different clues that put him on the trail of the criminal. Meanwhile Ingram, determined to obtain the formula, murders the scientist's assistant and assumes his identity by means of a rubber mask and wig. Chan, carefully following up his clues, eventually exposes the disguise and proves that the housekeeper had been Ingram's accomplice in an elaborate plan to steal the formula for an enemy country.

George Callahan wrote the screen play, James S. Burkett produced it, and Phil Rosen directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Tonight and Every Night" with  
Rita Hayworth, Lee Bowman  
and Janet Blair**

(Columbia, no release date set; time, 92 min.)

A good combination of romance, music, dancing and some comedy. The lavish production, the Technicolor photography, and the popularity of Rita Hayworth should draw the rank and file to the box-office. Not much can be said for the story, which is set in war-time London and which revolves around a valiant show troupe's determination to keep their show going despite the furious bombing of London; the incidents are obvious, and the dramatic situations are too forced. Musically, however, the picture is satisfying, for the tunes are catchy and the dancing is good. One number, in which Miss Hayworth does a strip-tease dance, is rather suggestive. Mark Platt, who gained fame as a dancer in the stage play "Oklahoma!", is exceptionally good; his dance routine is the outstanding bit in the picture. The romance between Miss Hayworth and Lee Bowman is appealing:—

Sympathetic to the aspirations of Marc Platt, an unknown dancer, Rita Hayworth and Janet Blair, performers in a London revue, induce Florence Bates, the show's owner, to give him a trial. Platt dances with the girls and, together, all rise to stardom. Blind to Janet's love for him, Platt falls in love with Rita. But Rita meets and falls in love with Lee Bowman, an RAF Squadron Leader. When Bowman is ordered away on a secret mission, Rita, unaware that he was not permitted to communicate with her, dejectedly assumes that he had forgotten about her. But a visit from Rev. Philip Merivale, Bowman's father, who proposes for his son by proxy, soon raises her spirits. Upon his return from his mission, Bowman asks Rita to accompany him to Canada, where he was being sent to instruct fliers. Rita, mindful of the show troupe's determination to never miss a show, despite Nazi bombings, hesitates, but Platt and Janet urge her to leave. Disconsolate at losing Rita to Bowman, Platt goes to a pub nearby, where he is followed by Janet. Both die when a Nazi bomb scores a direct hit on the pub. With Janet and Platt dead, and with Rita about to leave, Miss Bates announces that the show must close. Rita, feeling that Janet and Platt would have liked the show to continue, decides to remain. She parts with Bowman, who understandingly approves her decision.

Lesser Samuels and Abem Finkel wrote the screen play based up on the play, "Heart of a City," and Victor Saville produced and directed it. The cast includes Leslie Brooks, Professor Lamberti and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" with  
Dorothy McGuire, James Dunn  
and Joan Blondell**

(20th Century-Fox, February; time, 128 min.)

Based on the widely-read novel of the same title, this emerges as a powerful human-interest drama, which on different occasions stirs the emotions to such an extent that it will be difficult for the spectator to hold back the tears. It is the sort of entertainment that will be understood and enjoyed by the masses, because it concerns itself with plain people, and tells its story in an honest, direct, convincing and realistic manner. By the excellence of the direction and acting, the spectator is made to share in the joys and sorrows of an impoverished family as they struggle to keep body and soul together in the hope that they will one day know a better life. James Dunn, as the father, makes a forceful comeback with his part. As a jovial, unemployed singing waiter, he arouses one's sympathy because of his helplessness in that he cannot adjust himself to earn a living for his family. His untimely death, while seeking work, gives the picture its most tragic and pathetic moments. The deep attachment between Dunn and his young daughter, Peggy Ann Garner, is stirring. Dorothy McGuire, as the practical, self-sacrificing mother, is excellent; with this part, she establishes herself as one of the screen's foremost dramatic actresses. Outstanding support is provided by Joan Blondell, as the man-chasing aunt; Ted Donaldson, as the youngest child; James Gleason, as a saloon keeper; and Lloyd Nolan as the understanding policeman on the beat. The squalor of a tenement district in Brooklyn, a generation ago, has been reproduced with such care that it gives the proceedings a realistic touch.

Briefly, the story revolves around the monetary problems that beset the poverty-ridden family as a result of Dunn's inability to find a job. Worried about the coming of a new baby, Dorothy plans to take Peggy out of school so that she could go to work and help defray expenses. Peggy, a quiet, sensitive child of thirteen, dreamed of becoming a writer, and Dunn, a dreamer himself, had been encouraging her. Lest she be compelled to quit her schooling, Dunn determines to find any sort of work. Thinly clad against the wintry blasts, he catches pneumonia and dies. His tragic death makes Dorothy's problems even more acute, but James Gleason, a friendly saloon keeper, employs the children after school hours, paying them enough wages to help Dorothy meet expenses. Shortly after the new baby arrives, and on the day both children graduate from grammar school, Lloyd Nolan, a shy policeman, who had for some time admired Dorothy, asks her to marry him. Dorothy accepts his proposal, and he wins over the children by telling them that, though he cannot replace their father, he can be a good friend.

Tess Slesinger and Frank Davis wrote the screen play from the novel by Betty Smith, Louis D. Lighton produced it, and Elia Kazan directed it. The cast includes Ruth Nelson, John Alexander and others.

have compelled the exhibitors to turn to reissues to keep their theatres open. This print shortage has resulted in the reissue market turning into so profitable a business that some of the distributors have seen fit to reduce sharply the number of new features they released normally in order to add more of the old ones to their release schedules. And as though this subtle forcing of reissues, at exorbitant rentals, was not enough, rationed raw stock, which is needed so badly for prints of new features, has been and is used to make fresh prints of the old pictures.

The disposition of raw stock has gotten out of hand and, as this paper has already pointed out, there is immediate need for revision of the method by which the WPB allocates stock to the industry. A step in the right direction is indicated in a report by the daily trade papers that undisclosed industry sources have submitted to the WPB recommendations that the use of raw stock for reissues be banned so long as the tight film situation continues. While this recommendation, if adopted, would prove helpful, it would not in itself be enough to curb the distributors' overall abuse of their privilege to dispose of their stock quotas in whatever manner they see fit.

The situation calls for the formulation by the WPB of definite restrictions covering the use of the stock, designed to compel the distributors to recognize exhibition's undeniable equity in the stock. And it is up to Allied and other exhibitor organizations to protect that equity. These organizations should seek and demand representation for exhibition at all conferences with the WPB regarding raw stock. They should make known to this Government agency the result of the distributors' misuse of the stock, and they should recommend that strict regulations be formulated to prevent its continuance.

To repeat, there is immediate need for revision of the WPB's method of allocating raw stock, for therein, to a great extent, lies the root of many of the abuses that beset exhibitors today.

### COOPERATIVE BUYING ORGANIZATIONS

In urging the exhibitors to intensify their efforts to hold down film rentals, Mr. Myers, in his annual report to Allied's Board of Directors, made the following observation relative to the rapid growth of buying and booking combines:

"The rapid increase in cooperative buying reflects an increasing appreciation of the danger [high film rentals], although in some instances it may represent only the efforts of self-seeking promoters. It would seem the part of wisdom, in all such ventures, for the exhibitors to retain a high degree of control over such organizations so that they will not develop into Frankenstein monsters. . . ."

HARRISON'S REPORTS should like to add to Mr. Myers' wise observation that extreme caution must be taken by the exhibitors to make sure that any buying combine they either form or join confines its activities to the buying of film on better terms without in any way employing its buying power for the purpose of making it either difficult or impossible for other exhibitors to buy film.

The U. S. Supreme Court, in its recent *Crescent Case* decision, took pains to distinguish between pooling the buying power of independent theatres for the purpose of obtaining product on better rental terms, and a combination of exhibitors for the purpose of either depriving another exhibitor of an opportunity to obtain product or resorting to other acts, the effect of which might be to drive him out of business. The latter combination would be considered a conspiracy in restraint of interstate commerce, even if the conspiracy was effected within a single state, and would be punishable under the Sherman anti-trust laws.

Exhibitors who join a cooperative buying organization in good faith and with honest motive should heed Mr. Myers' admonition. They should "retain a high degree of control"

over the organization, in order to make it impossible for some "self-seeking promoter" to steer the organization away from its proper course.

### A NEW ZEALAND EXHIBITOR ADVISES THE AMERICAN PRODUCERS

Hollywood heroics and excessive flag-waving in war pictures, about which HARRISON'S REPORTS has often complained, and which has been a source of embarrassment to the American servicemen, particularly those stationed in foreign lands, are apparently just as distasteful to our friends in New Zealand. Here is what Mr. Edwin R. Greenfield, managing director of Modern Theatres (Provincial) Ltd., of Auckland, N. Z., has to say on the subject in a letter dated December 1, 1944 addressed to this paper:

"May I through you, take this opportunity of uttering a word of warning to American producers. I give this warning in sincere friendship and not by way of carping criticism.

"If American goes on producing pictures as they have been in these last 12 months or so, they will not only ruin their market in English-speaking countries but also our business as exhibitors as well. This is quite apart from the very bad effect they are having on non-American people politically.

"The people of New Zealand are sick and tired of war and flying pictures that are so theatrical that they make a joke of war. If producers could hear audiences laugh openly at the flag waving over-statements uttered in these pictures, exaggerating the ability and prowess of the American soldier, sailor or airman, they would realize that they are doing America no good.

"We in New Zealand, through personal contact, have the greatest admiration for the real American soldier, sailor or airman; and the behaviour of the American girls has been absolutely outstanding. A close friendship has grown up, but it is more than human friendship can stand to hear the American fighting man spoken of in every picture we have as 'the greatest in the world' or 'the greatest in history'. We feel here, that England has also done a little bit in this war and we are also somewhat proud of our own New Zealand Division, small as it may have been.

"The screen is a valuable medium for propaganda, but if that propaganda is laid on with such ludicrous exaggeration it kills its own value. A glaring example of why English pictures are now forging ahead in popularity may be seen in comparing 'DESPERATE JOURNEY' with ONE OF OUR AIRCRAFT IS MISSING'. The basic theme of this American film is the same as the English one, but whereas everything in the latter does at least come within the realm of possibility, the former, with its humanly impossible heroics was regarded by our audiences more as a Mack Sennett comedy than as a serious drama.

"I do hope you will accept this warning in the spirit that it is given, but we exhibitors here in New Zealand are finding our figures going down and down because of this type of picture driving the public away from the theatres."

There is sage advice in Mr. Greenfield's letter. Will the producers heed it? This paper believes that they had better heed it!

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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1945

No. 5

### MORE ABOUT RATIONING OF RAW FILM STOCK

Emphasizing that independent producers must be given direct allotments of raw stock in order to survive, Samuel Goldwyn, in an interview last Tuesday with the trade press, issued the following prepared statement:

"More important than any previous issue facing the motion picture industry is the problem of rationing of raw stock by the W.P.B.

"The question to be decided is whether the independent producers are to look to their Government or to the distributors for their raw film stock. Up to now, ration cards had been handed out to distributors and not to producers. The producers, as the original creators of the industry, demand a standing that will permit them to survive. No longer do they intend to remain subservient to the distributors who, by holding ration cards, have in many cases possessed the power of life or death over an independent producer.

"Newsprint, the other great medium of public expression, has been rationed to the publishers and not to the wholesalers and distributors.

"No producer complains because there is not enough raw stock to go around. They all know that there is a war on. Producers do complain that during a war the vast accumulations of finished films by the producer-distributor combinations is in effect a most dangerous and unsound hoarding. Some of these films have been stored away for a year or more.

"We must prevent these accumulations and recognize that in effect, they constitute a hoarding that will strangle the creative efforts of the independent producer at the very time when the importance of the independent producer in this industry is greater than it has ever been.

"There is a further point, a very important one,—which is that the purpose of film rationing is the public and for the public interest,—that and nothing more. In it, the independent producer has a great stake, and the public has a great stake in the independent producer.

"The last point is that raw stock should be made available in increasing quantities for the distribution in the United States of pictures made in England and other foreign countries. An honest realization of the place of films in international understanding and in commerce would dictate this as basic and essential."

HARRISON'S REPORTS has many times had occasion to differ in these columns with the opinions and policies of Samuel Goldwyn, but in this vital matter—the method used by the War Production Board in the rationing of raw film stock—it agrees with him wholeheartedly insofar as this method affects the interests of the independent producers.

Mr. Goldwyn sums up the situation well when he says that the distributors, under the present method of raw stock allocation, possess "the power of life or death over an independent producer."

As this paper disclosed in its issue of January 20, the W.P.B. rations the available raw stock to the distributors only, and it does not impose on them any rules or regulations as to the stock's disposition. In addition to using whatever quantity of their quota they wish for new productions, for positive prints of pictures, for positive prints of old pictures (reissues), and for the foreign markets, the distributors furnish to those of the independent producers with whom they have releasing agreements allotments of raw stock for new productions. These producers—men like Goldwyn and others who have been producing pictures independently for years—have no standing with the Government insofar as their raw film stock requirements are concerned; they must look to the distributors to fill their needs. And the deplorable part of it all is that the distributors are not compelled, either to give them some specific percentage of the rationed film stock, or to deal with them at all.

In normal times, most of the distributors would have considered it good business to come to terms with a leading independent producer for the distribution of his pictures. In fact, it sometimes happened that the quality of the few pictures delivered by the independent was of a caliber that served, not only as the bright spots in an otherwise dull program, but also to raise the prestige of the distributor considerably.

Today, however, the shortage of raw film stock, plus the abnormal theatre attendance, are enough to cool the distributors' enthusiasm for such a deal; every foot of raw stock given to an outside producer means that just so much less stock is available for the producer-distributor's own pictures, which, in these times, give him more profit per foot of raw stock than do the pictures of the independent producers from whom he can realize no more than a distribution fee.

While HARRISON'S REPORTS has not heard of even one instance where a producing-distributing company has used its control over raw stock to freeze out an independent producer, it wishes to point out that, under the present method of stock allocation, such a situation is possible. Accordingly, a condition that enables one branch of the industry to possess "the power of life or death" over another branch should not be permitted to exist.

This paper agrees that distribution has a definite stake in the available raw film stock. At the same time, the fact cannot be overlooked that both independent production and exhibition have equally important stakes. All three branches of the industry are inter-

(Continued on last page)

**"Roughly Speaking" with Rosalind Russell  
and Jack Carson**

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 128 min.)

There is a charming, entertaining quality about this domestic comedy-drama, in spite of the fact that its pace is leisurely and its running time is much too long. Based on the autobiography of Louise Randall Pierson, the story revolves around that lady's colorful life from 1902 to the present day and, through a series of different episodes, some of which are disconnected, depicts how she, as a progressive-minded woman with a determination to get the most out of life, failed to attain her objectives. The depiction of her unconventional family life and her financial ups and downs give the picture many humorous and pathetic moments. Rosalind Russell, as Mrs. Pierson, gives a vibrant and charming performance, winning one's sympathy and admiration by her ability to retain her courage and unfailing sense of humor despite her many heart-breaking disappointments. She receives excellent support from Jack Carson, as her second husband, a happy-go-lucky fellow, who understands her ambitions but strives unsuccessfully to help her attain them. The production values are very good.

The story begins with the death of Louise's father when she was twelve-years-old, and her determination, at that age, to make something of herself. At eighteen, she enrolls in college to prepare for a business career, eventually obtaining a secretarial position at Yale University. There she meets Rodney Crane (Donald Woods), a banker's son, and marries him after a whirlwind courtship. In time, they are blessed with four children. Rodney prospers, and the family moves to the country. Tragedy strikes when the children are stricken with infantile paralysis. All recover, except a daughter, who is left a cripple. When Rodney loses his job, Louise carries on cheerfully, even finding employment herself. Rodney, his pride hurt, leaves her for another woman. Months later, Louise secures a divorce and marries Harold Pierson (Jack Carson), an admitted, irresponsible playboy, whose temperament was very much like her own. Harold endears himself to Louise's children and, eventually, he and Louise have a child of their own. They establish a huge greenhouse business for the culture of roses, but they go bankrupt when the rose market becomes flooded. They next become interested in a new type of airplane and, just when success is within their grasp, the stock market crash wipes out their backers. Despite these setbacks, they manage to put the children through college while they themselves go through varying stages of financial worries as Harold tries his hand at selling vacuum cleaners and doing landscape work at the New York World's Fair. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, they see their three sons off to the war. With their two remaining children in a position to take care of themselves, Louise and Harold again face an uncertain future, but face it unafraid.

Mrs. Pierson wrote the screen play from her book, "Roughly Speaking," Henry Blanke produced it, and Michael Curtiz directed it. The cast includes Ray Collins, Kathleen Lockhart, Cora Sue Collins, Alan Hale, John Qualen, Andrea King, Robert Hutton, John Sheridan, Jean Sullivan and others.

**"What a Blonde" with Leon Errol  
and Veda Ann Borg**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 71 min.)

Despite the familiarity of its story, this program comedy should get by with audiences that are not too fussy. Discriminating patrons, however, will probably find the proceedings pretty dull, for the plot is developed in so obvious a fashion that one knows well in advance just what is going to happen. The comedy situations, which range from slapstick to the bedroom-farce variety, are quite familiar as well as ludicrous, but they provide enough laughs to make it amusing for those who are easily entertained. Leon Errol struggles valiantly with the material, and occasionally is pretty funny:—

Errol, a wealthy lingerie manufacturer, is refused additional gas coupons by his ration board unless he obtains riders to share his car. Approached by Michael St. Angel, a young inventor with a process for making artificial silk, Errol employs him as a share-the-ride passenger. Richard Lane, Errol's butler, who retained his job because he knew of Errol's amorous escapades, invites a group of unemployed show girls, including Veda Ann Borg, to live in Errol's home and to act as share-the-ride passengers. Desperate for gas, Errol, whose wife was away visiting her mother, agrees to the scheme. Complications arise when Clarence Kolb, an over-pious, raw material tycoon, who was Errol's only source of supply, pays a visit to the house with his wife. Lest Kolb misunderstand and refuse to do business with him, Errol persuades Veda to pose as his wife, and arranges for her friends to pose as maids. Matters become even more complicated when Kolb decides to stay overnight. In the midst of this confusion, Errol's wife returns unexpectedly. To get out of his predicament, Errol tells Kolb that she was his housekeeper, and arranges for Veda to act as the young inventor's wife. There follows a series of incidents in which every one hides in other people's bedrooms until Kolb discovers the deception and severs business relations with his host. Errol looks to the young inventor to take care of his material needs only to learn that his process cannot be used until after the war. With no gas and with no silk, Errol faces the gloomy task of squaring matters with his wife.

Charles Roberts wrote the screen play, Ben Stoloff produced it, and Leslie Goodwins directed it. The cast includes Elaine Riley, Chef Milani and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"I Love a Mystery" with Jim Bannon,  
Nina Foch and George Macready**

(Columbia, Jan. 25; time, 69 min.)

A better-than-average program murder-mystery melodrama. The story unfolds in an interesting manner and, since the involvements of the plot are not cleared up until the finish, one is kept pretty well mystified throughout. The story, of course, is far fetched; but this fact will probably be overlooked by the followers of the eerie-mystifying type of entertainment. There is no comedy to relieve the tension, nor is there any romantic interest. The direction is skillful and the acting good, but the players mean little at the box-office:—



Intrigued by the strange behaviour of George Macready in a San Francisco cafe, Jim Bannon and Barton Yarborough learn that he feared decapitation at the hands of a peg-legged man. Macready tells them of a wierd plot on his life instituted by a secret oriental cult, which had offered him \$10,000 for his head, because he was the image of the cult's founder. The founder's body had been preserved for many years, but the head was deteriorating and a new one was needed to take its place. At Macready's home, Bannon meets Nina Foch, his paralytic wife, and her actions lead him to suspect that her illness was faked. Bannon sets a trap for the peg-legged man, but his scheme is foiled by Carole Matthews, a mysterious woman who had attached herself to Macready in the cafe. On the following day, Bannon learns that the peg-legged man and Carole, who were father and daughter, had been murdered. Bannon, continuing his investigation, learns that the secret cult was non-existent, and that Lester Matthews, an art dealer, Gregory Gay, Nina's physician, and Nina herself, were working together in a diabolical plot to drive Macready insane in order to gain possession of his estate. All three suspected one another of killing Carole and her father, who were part of the conspiracy. None, not even Bannon, knew that Macready had discovered their scheme and had committed the two murders to avenge himself. Lest Bannon find him out, Macready tries unsuccessfully to kill him. Fleeing from the detective, Macready overturns his car and is decapitated. Nina and her confederates are taken into custody.

Charles O'Neal wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Henry Levin directed it. Unobjectionable morally.

**"Thunderhead—Son of Flicka"**  
**with Roddy McDowall and Preston Foster**  
(20th Century-Fox, March; time, 78 min.)

This sequel to "My Friend Flicka" retains all the wholesomeness, human interest and pictorial beauty of its predecessor; it is the sort of entertainment that should appeal to all types of audiences. The outdoor Technicolor photography and the exceptionally fine shots of horses roaming the range are so magnificent that they alone are worth the price of admission. The sequence in which two majestic white stallions have a fight to the death is extremely thrilling. An exciting horse race and a hunt for a wild, vicious albino stallion provide a number of other thrills. As in "My Friend Flicka," the story is a simple, sentimental tale about a young lad's love for his horse—this time, Flicka's foal, and it has been told with considerable charm and feeling. Roddy McDowall, who again plays the part of the rancher's son, is very good; he has poise, and, by not overacting, gives credence to the part:—

Thrilled when Flicka presents him with a white colt, Roddy plans to train it as a race horse, despite his father's (Preston Foster) warning that the colt will be as wild as its grandsire, a wild albino stallion that had been raiding Foster's herds, leading many mares away. Roddy, however, patiently trains the animal and, with the help of his mother (Rita Johnson), induces his father to pay a \$500 fee to enter Thunder-

head in a \$5,000 handicap race. With Roddy as his jockey, Thunderhead shows remarkable speed and quickly takes the lead, but, towards the finish, with the race almost won, the horse pulls a tendon and loses. His racing days over, Thunderhead becomes Roddy's saddle horse. Meanwhile the \$500 entrance fee had cut deeply into Foster's finances, causing him considerable concern. To make matters worse, the wild albino raids his herd again, killing a prize stallion. To rid himself and the neighboring ranchers of this vicious animal, Foster, taking Roddy and James Bell, his handyman, with him, determines to track down and kill the albino. While camping overnight, Roddy sees Thunderhead break loose from his stake and start off towards the hills. Roddy follows the animal into a hidden valley, where he finds the albino guarding many of his father's missing mares. The vicious animal rushes at Roddy, but Thunderhead comes to his rescue and, in a desperate struggle, deals the albino a death blow with his hoofs. Thunderhead leads the herd back to the ranch and, as a reward, Roddy gives him his freedom. The horse heads into the wilderness.

Dwight Cummins and Dorothy Yost wrote the screen play, Robert Bassler produced it, and Louise King directed it. The cast includes Diana Hale, Ralph Sanford and others.

**"Here Come the Co-Eds"**  
**with Abbott and Costello**

(Universal, Feb. 2; time, 87 min.)

Like most Abbott and Costello slapstick comedies, this one provokes hearty laughter in spite of the fact that the story is completely nonsensical. It makes use of many gags and routines, some new and some old; but these are, for the most part, comical. One sequence that will cause considerable laughter is where Costello, eating a bowl of oyster stew, is molested by a belligerent live oyster. His antics in a wrestling match with Lon Chaney as his opponent, his participation in a girl's basketball game, and his song-and-dance routine with Peggy Ryan, are other high spots in the comedy. The musical interludes furnished by Phil Spitalny and his all-girl orchestra are pleasant:—

Seeking to publicize his dancing sister (Martha O'Driscoll), But Abbott "plants" a story in a national magazine that her ambition was to earn enough money to attend Bixby College, an exclusive school for young ladies. Donald Cook, Bixby's young dean, seeking to modernize the school, awards a scholarship to Martha. Abbott and Costello accompany her to Bixby, where they obtain employment as caretakers. Cook's awarding of the scholarship to Martha arouses Charles Dingle, who held an overdue mortgage on the school; he demands that Martha be dismissed lest he foreclose. Learning that the mortgage amounted to twenty thousand dollars, Abbott and Costello decide to come to the rescue. They rally the support of the students and, through Costello's participation in a wrestling match and in a girls' basketball game, in which he outwits a crooked gambler, they raise the necessary funds to pay off the mortgage and save the school.

Arthur T. Horman and John Grant wrote the screen play, Mr. Grant produced it, and Jean Yarborough directed it. The cast includes June Vincent, Richard Lane, Joe Kirk, Bill Stern and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

dependent, for one cannot exist without the facilities and the aid of the others. Consequently, for the W.P.B. to follow a system of rationing that gives one a decided advantage over the others is a violation, not only of the intent of rationing, but also of one of the basic principles of our democracy—free enterprise.

The independent producers' survival is of vital importance to the exhibitors, for their creative efforts have been and still are a major force in the progress of motion picture production. Moreover, their pictures serve to create keener competition among the distributors. And the keener the competition the better off the exhibitors.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that the War Production Board, awakened by the demands of the independent producers, will take the necessary steps to rearrange its present method of stock allocation so that the interests of all branches of the industry will be protected fully in accordance with war-time exigencies.

\* \* \*

According to reports in the daily trade papers, the industry's advisory committee to the War Production Board on raw stock, which up to now has been comprised of distributor representatives only, has been enlarged to include representation for the independent producers as well as for the companies dealing with the distribution of reissues.

This enlarged advisory committee was scheduled to meet with the WPB in Washington on February 1 regarding stock allocations for the first quarter of 1945. While the results of this meeting will not be known until after this paper has gone to press, it is a foregone conclusion that, because of pressure exerted by the new members on the committee, the WPB will re-arrange its method of allocating stock so as to give due consideration to the different interests the new committeemen represent.

But where is exhibition? Why haven't the independent exhibitors, through their organizations, demanded representation on the advisory committee? The independent producers, having raised their voices in protest, were given representation on the committee quickly, and it goes without saying that their protests will bear fruit.

As this paper pointed out in last week's editorial, the root of many of the abuses that beset exhibitors today lies, to a great extent, in the WPB's failure to regulate the producer-distributors' disposal of the stock allocated to them. The WPB will not go out of its way to protect the exhibitors' equity in rationed raw stock unless the exhibitors raise their voices and demand that their equity be protected by regulatory restrictions on the disposition of the stock. It is high time the exhibitors stopped complaining to themselves. There is still a moment left in which to take the complaint to Washington and make demands for recognition and representation in a matter that is vital to their business existence.

### MORE ON SPARING THE PUBLIC'S FEELINGS

Hollywood's lack of consideration for the public's present troubled state of mind has prompted the Independent Theatre Owners of Northern California to issue the following statement in a bulletin dated January 19:

"The big shots in Hollywood have no ears, except for their 'Yes Men.' They will not listen to their Customers, the Exhibitors, who in turn listen to their Customers, the Theatre-going public. Time and time again the Exhibitors personally, and through their Trade Papers, have asked and begged the Hollywood Big Shots to stop using the War as a background for their pictures and to eliminate the heart-rending, tear-jerking scenes, the general public has enough trouble of its own without going to our theatres and having its heart pulled out. Have they listened? Have they acted? Hell no, they go right on in their stupid way, hurting the Industry and driving Patrons out of our Theatres. We know numerous people who are staying out of the Theatres because they refuse to be continually hurt. If you think we are kidding, read this reprint from one of Walter Winchell's Columns of recent date.

"A Cleveland reader writes: 'I lost my own son less than four months ago in the Pacific. He was 19. I write to ask your help in getting the movie makers to omit certain episodes. Last week was the first time (since receiving our tragic news) that my husband and I went to a movie theatre. So we chose one we thought would give us a lift. It was 'American Romance.' The scene where the parents read the telegram from the War Department was almost more than I could bear, as it almost paralleled our own grief. Then we saw 'Janie' and it was full of similar misery for us all and, I am sure, other parents whose sons have been killed in action. Why doesn't the movie industry consider all of us and not open parent's wounds again and again?'"

"Exhibitors have to answer questions just like the above, and all we can say is 'The Fat Heads in Hollywood will not listen to us or you, the Public. When they preview their pictures the more you cry the better they like it, and they think their picture is a success!' Our advice should be, stay out of the Theatres until after the War. Making a profit on the misery of others is *bad business*. For the morale of the country Hollywood should produce only pictures that will *lift up*, not *bear down*."

While HARRISON'S REPORTS does not condone the strong language this exhibitor organization has used to apprise the producers of their mistakes, it thoroughly agrees with its viewpoint.

### THE "BROWNOUT" ORDER

Exhibitors who operate theatres in territories affected by the WPB's "brownout" order, which, until further notice limits the lighting of marquees to 60-watts and bans entirely the use of all other exterior lighting, may obtain permission for greater illumination if they can prove that it is necessary for the public health or safety, or that the restriction places an unreasonable hardship on their operations.

In seeking greater lighting because of public health or safety, a certificate to that effect must be obtained from the local fire, police or health department. For reasons of unreasonable hardship, a statement setting forth all the pertinent facts must be made in writing. The certificate and statement are to be sent to the nearest WPB field office.

The WPB has warned that violators of the "brownout" order will be subject, not only to discontinuance of the electric service, but also to fine and imprisonment.



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Circle 7-4622

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Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1945

No. 6

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## THE BITTER FRUITS OF INACTION

As most of you undoubtedly know by this time, the War Production Board, at its meeting in Washington on February 1 with the industry's advisory committee on raw stock, has announced that the industry will receive sixteen million feet less raw stock for the first quarter of 1945 than it received during the last quarter of 1944. Originally, the WPB had estimated that the cut would be approximately thirty million feet.

This latest quarterly stock allocation takes on a special significance because, for the first time since the WPB began to ration raw film stock to the industry, it has seen fit to place a restriction on its usage. It has ordered the producer-distributors to limit the number of positive prints on new features to a maximum of 285. The WPB has indicated, however, that this order will be relaxed in the event a distributor can prove that a particular feature has not exhausted its playing time and that the 285 prints or a portion of them are no longer in a condition to give satisfactory projection in theatres still to be played. In such a case, additional prints may be authorized.

I don't know what prompted the WPB to confine its restrictions on the use of raw stock solely to a limitation of the number of positive prints processed. But I do know that a ruling more detrimental to the interests of the already burdened subsequent-run exhibitors could not have been made.

The deplorable part of this ruling limiting prints is that, in effect, it permits the producer-distributors to absorb the cut of sixteen million feet at the expense of the exhibitors. Simple mathematics prove this. Let us assume, for example, that the eleven distributing companies will deliver approximately 400 feature pictures for the season. Dividing this number by four gives us 100 features for each quarter. To be conservative, let us assume that an average of 20 fewer prints will be processed on each feature picture than have heretofore been made. This assumption is indeed conservative, since the distributors generally process from 300 to 400 prints on important features. That will give us a total of 2000 fewer prints for the quarter. Still keeping our figures conservative, let us say that the average length of each feature is 8000 feet. Multiply this length by 2000 prints and you get a total of 16,000,000 feet saved, which is equal to the total cut in raw stock for the quarter.

The aforementioned figures are, mind you, conservative. To effect a still greater savings of raw stock, all that the producer-distributors have to do is to keep reducing the number of prints. And to those who would complain about a shortage of prints, the

producer-distributors need do no more than refer them to the WPB's directive. But let us not concern ourselves with what the distributors might do under this latest directive. Let us instead examine the conditions that will be brought about by the producer-distributors' conformity with the directive. With fewer prints available, it follows that the subsequent-run exhibitors will have to rely more than ever on reissues in order to keep their theatres in operation. With fewer prints, it follows also that the producer-distributors' stranglehold on exhibition will be tightened. The limitation of prints will serve, therefore, to expand the producer-distributors' operations in the reissue market from which they are already realizing handsome profits. Just imagine, then, how much more profitable it will become when the exhibitors, desperate for product, find themselves compelled to book reissues. With no restrictions on the use of raw stock for prints of reissues, the producer-distributors, under their present policy of unreasonable rental demands for this type of product, will turn the situation into a veritable bonanza for themselves.

The savings in raw stock at the expense of the exhibitor will serve, not only to bolster the reissue market, but also to further the producer-distributors' expansion of their interests in foreign markets. Last week, this paper discussed the difficult situation that the distributor had to face in Mexico, where the officials are demanding that foreign producers bring in their own raw stock for the processing of prints to be exhibited in that country. Now Argentina has become huffy. The officials of that country have informed the representatives of foreign film companies that they will restrict the number of pictures imported unless raw stock is allocated to the Argentinian film industry. According to a report in *Film Daily*, Argentina is demanding as much raw stock as there is in the number of prints sent into the country by foreign companies. Argentina and Mexico are lucrative film markets, and so are many other foreign markets where a similar shortage of raw stock exists. To retain their holds on these markets, the producer-distributors will have to draw from their regular stock quotas. There is nothing to stop them from doing so. Yet the fact remains that every foot of raw stock they withdraw for a foreign market makes just that much less available for the home exhibitors.

In view of the situation's seriousness, some questions are very much in order. Why has a restriction been placed on the number of prints for new features, which are the life-blood of exhibition, while no re-

(Continued on last page)

### **"Leave it to Blondie" with Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton**

(Columbia, Feb. 22; time, 73 min.)

The followers of the "Blondie" pictures should find much enjoyment in this latest of the series, which is the first one produced in about two years; it will serve as a good supporting feature wherever something light is needed to round out a double bill. The story follows the usual pattern employed in the series, with Arthur Lake, as "Dagwood," finding himself in numerous predicaments as the result of a misunderstanding, but this time the comedy situations and the dialogue are a good deal funnier than that of the previous pictures. Even the musical accompaniment plays a very effective part in provoking laughter. It holds one's interest well, for there is something happening all the time. The popularity of the "Blondie" radio program should mean something at the box-office:—

Finding themselves with a \$100 surplus after balancing their budget, Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton decide to contribute the amount to a charity fund. Each, however, unwittingly draws a \$100 check for this purpose, giving the checks to different committees. Neither one has the courage to renege on the contribution, and both become concerned over the realization that one of the checks will "bounce." Meanwhile Larry Sims, their young son, finds an old song, "That Blue-Eyed Sweetheart of Mine," written by Lake's uncle twenty years previously, and, to help his parents out of their financial muddle, he enters the tune in a song contest sponsored by Eula Morgan, a wealthy dowager, hoping it will win the first prize of \$250. Unaware that Larry had put his name on the song as the composer, Lake is astonished when informed that he was one of the three finalists in the contest. Penny, blue-eyed herself, believes that Lake had written the song for her. Jonathan Hale, Lake's employer, seeking to sell some of his property to Miss Morgan, instructs Lake to change the title of the song from "Blue-Eyed" to "Black-Eyed," and to flatter her with attention as he sings it in the finals. Marjorie Weaver, a black-eyed brunette, is assigned to teach Lake how to sing. Penny, listening in on the rehearsal and overhearing the change in title, misunderstands and locks Lake out of the house. Lake spends a miserable night during which he catches a severe cold. His voice reduced to a whisper, Lake arranges for a special recording to be played behind the curtain while he goes through the motions of singing. Every one at the finals is impressed until the needle on the record sticks, exposing the hoax. Lake, helpless, confesses to Miss Morgan that he did not write the song and that he had an ulterior motive in flattering her. Impressed by his honesty, she buys Hale's property and arranges for Lake to receive a handsome bonus.

Connie Lee wrote the screen play, Burt Kelly produced it, and Abby Berlin directed it. The cast includes Chick Chandler, Maude Eburne and others.

### **"Sergeant Mike" with Larry Parks and Jeanne Bates**

(Columbia, Nov. 9; time, 60 min.)

Produced on a very modest budget, this is a minor war melodrama, best suited for the juvenile trade in neighborhood and small-town theatres. Adults will find it to be but mildly interesting. The story, which deals with the training of war dogs and their exploits

in battle, offers little originality but it has enough action of the type to satisfy youngsters. A considerable number of stock shots have been incorporated into the footage. The principal characters are pleasant, but there is nothing outstanding about their actions. The romantic interest is mild and unimportant:—

Ordered to report to the K-9 Corps, Larry Parks is assigned to train Sergeant Mike, a huge German shepherd. A letter from eight-year-old Larry Joe Olsen, the dog's former owner, inquiring about his pet, brings Parks to Baltimore where he visits the boy and reassures him of the dog's welfare. Parks also meets Jeanne Bates, the boy's widowed mother, whose husband had been killed in action. A mutual friendship develops and Parks promises Larry that he will make a hero out of Sergeant Mike. Their training completed, Parks and the dog board a transport bound for a Jap-held Pacific island. Leading a patrol, Parks and the dog head for the island's interior with orders to contact the enemy. The men grope their way through the jungle cautiously, and the alertness of the war dogs enable them to wipe out two Japanese machine gun nests. Eventually, the men find themselves cut off by superior Jap forces. Parks dispatches Mike with a message to headquarters for reinforcements, which arrive in time to destroy the Japanese. Upon their return to the United States, Parks and Sergeant Mike are decorated for bravery while Larry and his mother look on with admiration.

Robert Lee Johnson wrote the screen play, Jack Fier produced it, and Henry Levin directed it. The cast includes Jim Bannon and others.

### **"The Chicago Kid" with Donald Barry, Otto Kruger and Lynne Roberts**

(Republic, no release date set; time, 68 min.)

A fair gangster-type program melodrama. The plot, revolving around a conscientious young man who turns to a life of crime to avenge his father's death in prison, is routine; but it has enough exciting situations to give satisfaction to audiences that enjoy pictures of this type. The black market activities of the criminals give the story a timely angle. The performances are reasonably good, with Donald Barry, as the young man seeking vengeance, playing his part in a style that is reminiscent of the gangster roles played by James Cagney. The fact that the gangsters, including the hero, eventually pay for their crimes lessens the demoralizing effects of their acts:—

Embittered when he learns that his father had died in prison on the eve of his release, Donald Barry, who had always felt that his father's conviction was a frame-up, determines to even matters with Otto Kruger, wealthy head of the auditing firm that had employed his father; Kruger's testimony had convicted him for embezzlement. Barry deliberately arranges to meet Kruger, his daughter, Lynne Roberts, and his son, Henry Daniels and, concealing his identity, wins their unsuspecting friendship and secures employment in Kruger's firm. Enabled to obtain confidential information on government-frozen commodities stored in warehouses, Barry teams up with Tom Powers, a racketeer, and arranges for a series of warehouse robberies, storing the loot in a warehouse of their own for black market distribution. Despite his love for Lynne, Barry determines to frame her father in connection with the robberies. One day, however,



he discovers evidence that convinces him of his father's guilt and proves that Kruger had protected him from a more serious charge. Powers, unaware of the changed state of affairs, arranges to have Kruger murdered in the belief that he was doing Barry a favor. Barry, conscience-stricken, resigns his position. Too involved to discontinue his illegal activities, Barry becomes callous and replaces Powers as leader of the gang. The police, suspicious of Barry's transportation business, which served as a front for his black market dealings, ask Lynne and her brother to help trap Barry. Young Daniels, scoffing at their suspicions, agrees to secure a job in Barry's office and to report secretly to them; he meant to prove Barry's innocence. Powers, learning of Daniels' connection with the police, attempts to kill the lad, but Barry saves him. To protect Barry from the gang, Lynne and Daniels take him to their mountain lodge. The gang follows them and, in a showdown fight, Barry wipes them out and is himself wounded fatally. Dying, he makes a full confession to Lynne.

Jack Townley wrote the screen play, Eddy White produced it, and Frank McDonald directed it. The cast includes Chick Chandler, Joseph Crehan, Paul Harvey and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"It's in the Bag" with Fred Allen, Jack Benny and Binnie Barnes**

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 87 min.)

Very entertaining. It is not an hilarious comedy, but it does keep one chuckling all the way through. The story, which revolves around Fred Allen's misadventures as he tries to prevent three crooks from swindling him out of a huge inheritance, makes little sense, but it serves very well as a means to tie in a number of highly amusing sequences in which Allen trades gags with Jack Benny, William Bendix, Robert Benchley, Jerry Colonna, and Minerva Pious, the "Mrs. Nussbaum" of radio fame. Another comical sequence is the one in which Allen appears with Don Ameche, Victor Moore, and Rudy Vallee as singing waiters in a "Gay Nineties Cafe." One of the funniest situations concerns Allen's troubles with ushers in an over-crowded movie house as they shunt him from one aisle to another in his search for seats. The action slows down occasionally, but for the most part the pace is lively. Allen's current popularity, and the drawing powers of the other players, should put the picture over pretty well:—

Allen, a penniless flea circus owner, learns from the newspapers that he had inherited twelve million dollars from a grand-uncle who had died under mysterious circumstances. With his wife, Binnie Barnes, his daughter, Marion Pope, and his young son, Dickie Tyler, Allen moves into a swanky penthouse apartment and splurges wildly on clothes and other luxuries. On the following day, he learns from John Carradine, his uncle's crooked attorney, that the fortune had been dissipated and that his sole inheritance was five antique chairs. Distracted, Allen returns to his hotel to face his many financial commitments. When the five chairs arrive, Allen sells them to an antique dealer for \$300. Shortly after, a bank messenger arrives with a sealed package containing a recording of his uncle's voice. In his "voice from the grave," the uncle informs Allen that his partner (John Miljan) and Carradine had swindled him out of his

millions, but that he had salvaged \$300,000, which he had concealed in one of the five chairs. Allen becomes frantic when he learns that the chairs had been resold and that the list of purchasers had been destroyed by fire. His search for the missing chairs leads him into a series of misadventures with numerous persons, and he even finds himself suspected of murdering his uncle. It is not until he locates the fifth chair in the office of William Bendix, a notorious gangster, that Allen, with Bendix's aid, retrieves the \$300,000 and brings his uncle's murderers to justice.

Jay Dratler and Alma Reville wrote the screen play, Jack H. Skirball produced it, and Richard Wallace directed it. The cast includes William Terry, Sidney Toler, George Cleveland, Emory Parnell and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Kid Sister" with Judy Clark and Roger Pryor**

(PRC, Feb. 6; time, 55 min.)

Just a minor program comedy. Those who look for fast action may find this somewhat tiresome because it is mostly dialogue; it may, however, entertain audiences that can be amused at the antics of a 'teen-aged, love-struck girl. Not only is the story thin, but it has been developed in a weak manner and fails to carry a punch. Parts of the picture seem lifeless, but the meager story material, not the players, is to be blamed:—

Revolting against her mother's insistence that she remain in the background until Constance Worth, her older sister, acquired a husband, Judy Clark determines to follow her romantic desires. When Roger Pryor, a wealthy bachelor, is invited to dinner at her home, Judy, forbidden to attend, poses as the maid and receives him. The ruse riles her mother and, Judy, to escape her wrath, sneaks out of the house through a bedroom window. She is seen by Frank Jenks, a prowling burglar, who, believing her to be a member of his craft, drives her away in a stolen car. Pursued by a motorcycle policeman, they stop the car and escape on foot. The policeman overtakes Judy on the grounds of Pryor's estate, but he releases her when she convinces him that she was employed there as a maid. Judy, confronted by Clark, becomes aware that she had aroused his interest. She allows him to think that she was a female "raffles" and agrees to let him "save" her. Matters become complicated when Jenks shows up to rescue his "partner-in-crime." Judy fights him off, forcing him to flee, but the incident compels her to reveal her identity to Pryor, who becomes peeved at having been victimized. Weeks later, at another dinner party in her home, Judy and Pryor sneak away for an evening of dancing. Returning late, they find themselves confronted by Richard Byron, Judy's irate school-day sweetheart. While Pryor tries to calm the young man, Judy dashes into the house only to be stopped by Jenks, who accuses her of double-crossing him and demands to be led to the safe. After a series of misadventures in which the whole household is aroused, Judy succeeds in trapping the burglar. She and Pryor announce their engagement much to the consternation of her bewildered mother and sister.

Fred Myton wrote the screen play, Sigmund Neufeld produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it. The cast includes Minerva Urecal, Ruth Robinson and others.

strictions have been placed on the use of rationed raw stock for (a) prints of reissues; (b) short subjects; (c) the producer-distributors' expansion in foreign markets; (d) new productions that will add to backlogs that are already in excess of the market's requirements; (e) features of excessive length; (f) Technicolor productions, which require approximately 25% more raw stock than is used on a black and white feature of equal length? By what line of reasoning, or, shall we say, by whose line of reasoning has the WPB determined that the raw stock situation will best be alleviated by a limitation of prints only?

HARRISON'S REPORTS assumes that the WPB based its determination on the recommendations of the industry's advisory committee on raw stock with whom it has been meeting at regular intervals. The purpose of this committee, as this paper understands it, is to keep the WPB advised of the industry's problems with respect to the raw stock shortage, and to recommend in accordance with war time exigencies ways and means with which to meet the shortage. But who are the members of this committee and what are their affiliations? Every member represents either production or distribution. Not one represents exhibition.

HARRISON'S REPORTS has no grievance against the producer-distributors for their being the only ones represented on the committee. Nor does it quarrel with the WPB for dealing with them and accepting their recommendations. The producer-distributors are doing the natural thing to protect their interests, and the WPB, hearing only their side of the story, accepts their word and acts accordingly. Had the exhibitors, as this paper urged repeatedly, presented their side of the story to the WPB, in all probabilities rules and regulations would have been formulated to protect their interests, and a restriction limiting the number of prints might not have come into being.

What better example can the exhibitors have of the power of a unified protest than the one raised by the independent producers regarding the WPB's policy of allocating raw stock to the distributors only? The independent producers protested that this policy placed them at the mercy of the distributors whose control of the stock gave them the power of life or death over independent production. The WPB recognized the justice of their claim and, as a result of their protests, modified its policy so that each qualified independent producer would receive a stock quota directly from the Government with the right to transfer his quota from one distributor to another.

In arranging for these separate allocations, Stanley Adams, head of the WPB Consumers Durable Goods Division, stated that his bureau would make certain that no producer or distributor uses his raw stock as a lever for advantage over the other. There is no reason to believe that Mr. Adams feels differently about the producer-distributors using this same stock as a lever for advantage over the exhibitors. But until exhibition makes known its equity in raw stock, and until it makes known the abuses it is undergoing as a result of the producer-distributors' indiscriminate use of the stock, no one can expect Mr. Adams to take any action.

Having urged the exhibitors for many weeks to take action in this matter, this paper was indeed gratified to learn that the Independent Theatre

Owners Association of New York, roused by the order limiting the number of prints, and realizing that it would bring hardship to subsequent-run exhibitors, telegraphed Mr. Adams last week-end and demanded an immediate hearing to discuss the facts. The ITOA's telegram pointed out that "there can be no quarrel with an order which is equitable to all parties concerned, but this order will be so discriminatory that an irreparable injustice will be heaped upon the subsequent-run independent exhibitors of this country."

The ITOA is to be commended for being the first exhibitor organization to take the lead in seeking recognition of the exhibitor's equity in rationed raw stock. To succeed, they will require strong support from independent exhibitors throughout the country.

The use of raw stock in these days is a matter of vital importance to every exhibitor, regardless of what run he enjoys. Its equitable use can be beneficial; its misuse, detrimental. The present situation calls for immediate action. Send your protests, either by telegraph or letter, to Mr. Stanley Adams, Director, War Production Board, Consumers Durable Goods Division, Washington, D. C. Tell him why a reduction of feature prints will affect your operations, and demand that rules and regulations be formulated to control the use of raw stock in a manner that will not permit the producer-distributors to hold an advantage over the exhibitor.

As it has already been said, Mr. Adams has made clear that his department will not allow the distributors or the independent producers to use their raw stock quotas as a club over one another. By the same line of reasoning, it is fair to assume that he will not allow these two branches of the industry to use those same quotas as a club over the exhibitors. But unless you, the exhibitors, call his attention to the abuses arising out of the misuse of raw stock, you cannot expect him to give you relief.

## REPUBLIC MOVES AHEAD

The recent announcement by Herbert J. Yates, Sr., president of Republic Pictures, that his company had concluded a special producing-directing pact with Frank Borzage marks a huge step forward in the many strides Republic has made in its ten-year history.

The contract, in which Borzage enjoys a substantial financial interest and which is for a long term, calls for the institution of a separate producing unit with Borzage the sole authority over stories and plays to be purchased and produced, and stars to be featured. According to Mr. Yates, each Borzage production will be in the top-budget bracket, costing well in excess of one and one-half million dollars.

Mr. Yates has stated that the Borzage arrangement is but the first of other similar associations being planned, all aimed at greater expansion of the company's activities in both production and distribution.

Since its inception ten years ago, Republic's rise under Yates' expert leadership has been sound and steady. The advancement of the smaller companies has always been of special interest to HARRISON'S REPORTS, and it predicts that Republic, with a few more arrangements similar to the one with Borzage, will soon be classed as one of the big companies in the business.



Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

# HARRISON'S REPORTS

## Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions ..	16.50
Canada .....	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain .....	15.75
Australia, New Zealand,	
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35c a Copy	

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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
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Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1945

No. 7

## The Department of Justice Means Business

As most of you know, the United States Government, through the Department of Justice, has made application to proceed with the trial of the New York anti-trust case, in which the Consent Decree had been entered against the five consenting distributors. When it was found that the trial could not take place until the fall of this year, the Government applied for temporary relief pending the outcome of the trial and the entry of a final decree. In its brief supporting the application for temporary relief, the Department of Justice has worked out a case against the distributors on the subject of clearance which seems to be as powerful as it is astounding.

Abram F. Myers, General Counsel of National Allied, in a release dated February 9, 1945, analyzes the brief in so clear a manner that its subject matter and its significance can be understood by the layman. And, since HARRISON'S REPORTS considers the matter of the New York anti-trust suit of importance to every one in the industry, the pertinent portions of Mr. Myers' release are herewith reproduced. Says Mr. Myers:

"The temporary relief requested is confined to clearance, more especially unreasonable clearance granted to affiliated theatres. . . . In the nature of the case, the relief available on a motion in advance of a trial on the merits is limited. But while narrow in scope the requested order, if granted, will be devastating in its effect upon the elaborate clearance system which the defendants have built up for the protection of their affiliated prior-run theatres.

"But the real significance of the Government's brief, which appears to have been overlooked in the comments thus far made, is that it raises legal questions which strike at the very foundations of the defendants' monopoly. A weakness of the defendants—which has cropped out in all attempts by exhibitors to discuss industry problems with them—is that they have stressed the legality of each act or practice, considered separately and apart from all the others, and have closed their eyes to the altered legal status of such acts and practices when viewed as parts of a system or combination. The Government's brief should jar them into an over-all survey of the legal predicament into which they have drifted.

### "LEGALITY OF CLEARANCE

"The brief treats of clearance from the standpoints of economics, the law, and enforceability. It is, in effect, a searching treatise on the subject and is bound to have a profound influence on industry practices. Clearance, it points out, obviously restricts the ability of one theatre to compete with another; therefore, an agreement fixing clearance is a violation of the Sherman Act, unless the restraint is a reasonable one. Such restrictions have in the past been imposed by the distributors on the theory that their copyrights entitle them to impose such conditions 'as are necessary and appropriate to realize maximum revenue from the exploitation of the copyright.' Upon this theory, the distributors have customarily undertaken to fix the minimum admission prices at which their films should be exhibited to the public. The brief sets forth, in the appendix, excerpts from the exhibition contracts of the five consenting defendants showing that maintenance of those minimum prices is made a condition of the enjoyment of such run and clearance privileges as the distributor grants.

"It is then pointed out that the prescribed minimum admission price is not a price paid for the right to exhibit the picture—the consideration for that right is the film rental stipulated in the license. At this stage the brief brushes aside all distinction between pictures licensed on flat rentals and those licensed on percentage. In either case, it says, the amount of the film rental will vary with the ability of the film to attract patrons to the theatre and thus, in both cases, the distributor has a 'stake' in the exhibitor's admission prices. Thus the Government, in its first line of attack, takes the extreme position that any attempt by the distributors to regulate admission prices, regardless of the terms under which the film is licensed, constitutes resale price maintenance in violation of the Sherman Act. But the most deadly blow aimed at the heart of the defendants' monopoly is contained in a later passage.

"The brief recites that each of the five consenting defendants—Fox, Loew, Paramount, RKO and Warner—(1) controls a large circuit of theatres, (2) licenses films to its own circuit, the circuits owned by the others and theatres competing with them, by license agreements which fix the minimum admission prices to be charged by all of the theatres licensed, (3) maintenance of those admission prices is tied to run and clearance provisions determining the relative time at which films licensed become available for exhibition in competing theatres. The brief then ties all this up into a bundle which might aptly be labeled 'Gigantic Price-Fixing Combination.' It says:

"We submit that such a system of admission price-fixing by cross-licensing is *prima facie* illegal because it is in effect a means by which affiliated theatre operators, through their distribution affiliates, agree with each other as to the admission prices that should be charged by their various theatres in the competitive areas in which each operates and as to those to be charged by independent theatre operators who compete with these affiliated theatres. Such a price-fixing system is unreasonable per se and may not be justified under the Sherman Act by any proof that these defendants might offer."

### "A BLOW FOR LIBERTY

"Independent exhibitors will be gratified that the brief strikes a blow at the gradual usurpation by the distributors of control over the operating policies of the theatres—an encroachment against which Allied has many times protested. Ownership of the copyright of a feature film is only one of the many property rights involved in the exhibition of motion pictures. The brief speaks a word for good old brick and mortar. The distributors are reminded that they do not sell their film to the theatre-going public; that they merely license it to the exhibitor. And the exhibitor does not sublicense it to the public 'but sells his patrons the right to witness a performance . . . of which the exhibition of a single feature film may be only a part.' 'The exhibitor,' says the brief, 'who possesses the theatre, determines the program of entertainment to be offered and collects the admission fees which make the exhibition of the film profitable, would normally determine independently the price at which that entertainment should be made available to the public. . . .'

(Continued on last page)



**"Frisco Sal" with Susanna Foster,  
Turhan Bey and Alan Curtis**  
(Universal, Feb. 23; time, 94 min.)

Even though this is colorful and more or less melodramatic, it seldom rises above the level of fair entertainment. At times, it is quite tedious. The story, which deals with the hurly-burly days of San Francisco's Barbary Coast during the gay nineties, has been done many times, and this version offers little that is either original or outstanding. With the exception of two slapstick saloon brawls, the action is liesurely. Susanna Foster's singing is, of course, delightful. The performances are adequate enough, considering the fact that the players were up against story material that is not only trite but also thin:—

Arriving at San Francisco's Barbary Coast to seek information on the reported murder of her brother, whom she had not seen for many years, Susanna Foster, a New England choir singer, blunders into a cafe operated by Turhan Bey in search of employment. Bey refuses to hire her; he was not in a receptive mood, for Alan Curtis, leader of a gang of hoodlums, had just threatened to wreck his cafe unless he paid for "protection." Curtis returns with his gang and starts a fight. The police intervene, and Susanna finds herself among those arrested. Bey, amused, bails her out and employs her as a singer, subsequently falling in love with her. Finding a ring with her brother's name on it in Bey's office, Susanna suspects that Bey had something to do with his disappearance. She enlists the aid of detective Thomas Gomez. Knowing Curtis' hatred for Bey, Gomez goes to him for information about Susanna's brother. Curtis, seeing an opportunity to break up the romance between Susanna and Bey, builds up a case against his rival that convinces Susanna that he was responsible for her brother's death. Bey, ignorant of Susanna's suspicions, makes plans for his marriage to her, but she turns down his proposal and accuses him of murdering her brother. Susanna leaves him to attend a Christmas party given by Curtis. At the party, she comes across evidence that convinces her that Curtis himself was her missing brother. Without revealing her discovery, she returns to Bey's cafe. Curtis, furious at her return, gathers his henchmen and storms Bey's cafe for a showdown fight. In the midst of the brawl, Curtis breaks into Bey's office to shoot him, but Susanna stops him, revealing that she and Bey had been married only a few minutes before. The two new brothers-in-law declare peace.

Curt Siodmak and Gerald Geraghty wrote the screen play, and George Waggner produced and directed it. The cast includes Andy Devine, Collette Lyons, Samuel S. Hinds, Fuzzy Knight and others. Unobjectionable morally.

**"Having Wonderful Crime"  
with Pat O'Brien, George Murphy  
and Carole Landis**

(RKO, release date not set; time, 70 min.)

Despite the hard work by the members of the cast, "Having Wonderful Crime" never rises much above the level of moderately entertaining program fare. It is a breezy type murder-mystery melodrama in which the comedy is stressed more than the murder angle, but the story material is so weak and the comedy so forced that little of it makes an impression. Not only is the story thin, but it is also confusing; few will be able to follow its developments. None of the characters do anything to arouse sympathy, since most of their actions are ridiculous. There is some suspense in the closing scenes, but hardly enough to excite any one:—

Pat O'Brien, an attorney and amateur sleuth, finds himself continuously in trouble with the police because of the practical jokes played on him by George Murphy and Carole Landis, newlyweds, who were his close friends. All three are at a theatre when George Zucco, a magician, fails to reappear after doing a disappearing act. O'Brien, lest he become involved in the mystery, accompanies the newlyweds to a vacation resort. En route, they come across Lenore Aubert, the missing magician's assistant, whose car was stalled. They offer to give her a lift but become suspicious when she insists that they take along her huge trunk; they believed it contained the magician's body. Arriving at the hotel, Murphy deliberately registers Lenore as O'Brien's wife and orders her trunk sent up to his room. The trio open the trunk at the first opportunity and find nothing but magic equipment in it. Later, however, they discover Zucco's body in it. While the three try to figure out how not to become involved in the murder, the trunk disappears. O'Brien determines to solve the mystery. Aided by Carole and Murphy, he embarks on an investigation that leads all three into a series of difficulties that nearly cost them their lives. After

numerous narrow escapes and an additional killing, they eventually trap the murderer.

Howard J. Green, Stewart Sterling and Parke Levy wrote the screen play, Robert Fellows produced it, and Eddie Sutherland directed it.

**"Bring on the Girls" with Veronica Lake,  
Eddie Bracken and Sonny Tufts**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 92 min.)

While not exceptional, this Technicolor musical is fairly enjoyable because of the tuneful songs, the dancing, the romantic involvements, the comedy, and the lavish settings. The story, which is a variation of the boy-meet-girl theme, is pretty thin, but it moves along at a steady pace and offers a number of laugh-provoking situations. The most comical sequence takes place in a nightclub, where Spike Jones and his Orchestra play a comedy version of the song "Chloe." This sequence, incidentally, is the only one in which Jones' orchestra appears, but it is the funniest part of the picture and, since it comes toward the finish, it will send the audience out in a happy frame of mind:—

To make sure that people, particularly girls, would like him for himself and not for his money, Eddie Bracken, a wealthy young man, decides to enlist in the navy. His legal advisors, however, insist that Sonny Tufts, a junior partner, enlist with him and act as his guardian. Both are sent to the same training camp. Bracken manages to keep his wealth a secret and, the first time he is given liberty, he manages to sneak away from Tufts and goes to a nightclub. There he meets and falls in love with Veronica Lake, a cigarette girl, unaware that she was Tufts' former sweetheart. Veronica, a "gold-digger," does not let on that she knew of his wealth. Learning of Bracken's new-found love, Tufts mistakenly concludes that the girl was Marjorie Reynolds, the club's singer. He investigates Marjorie and becomes satisfied that she was not the sort of girl to fall in love with Bracken for his money. When Bracken's family becomes disturbed over news of his engagement, Tufts, still thinking the girl was Marjorie, reassures them. He is shocked no end when he learns that the girl was Veronica. Tufts warns Bracken against her, but the young man, believing him jealous, refuses to listen. Tufts decides to woo Veronica and win her for himself, thus saving Bracken. Meanwhile Marjorie had fallen in love with Bracken but kept her feelings to herself. Tufts' interference with his romance so confuses Bracken that he begins to doubt Veronica's love. He pretends to have become stone deaf in order to learn what she really thought of him. Veronica sees through the ruse, but Marjorie unwittingly allows him to overhear her declaration of love. After a series of farcical interludes in which Veronica's love for Tufts flames anew, it all ends with Veronica in Tufts' arms and with Bracken realizing his love for Marjorie.

Karl Tunberg and Darrell Ware wrote the screen play, Fred Kohlmar produced it, and Sidney Lanfield directed it. The cast includes Grant Mitchell, Peter Whitney, Alan Mowbray, Huntz Hall and others. Unobjectionable morally.

**"Betrayal from the East"  
with Lee Tracy and Nancy Kelly**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 82 min.)

Supposedly based on factual Japanese espionage activities in this country prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, this is an interest-holding, exciting melodrama, well directed and acted. The interest lies in the counter-espionage methods employed by Army Intelligence to trap the spies. Since the hero becomes a member of the spy ring to aid the U. S. Government, one is naturally held in suspense fearing for his safety. The picture makes no concession to the squeamish in its depiction of Jap brutalities. Towards the end, the action becomes quite thrilling, culminating in the roundup of the spies:—

When Philip Ahn, his Japanese friend, questions him about the Panama Canal, Lee Tracy, an ex-soldier of shady character, intimates that he was well acquainted with the Zone and that one of his Army pals was stationed there. Ahn makes Tracy a sizeable loan and, hinting at a profitable job, induces him to come to Los Angeles. There, Tracy is interviewed in a darkened room by a mysterious Jap who hires him to secure military information from his friend in Panama. Tracy manages to contact Capt. Addison Richards, of Army Intelligence, and lays the enemy's plan before him. Richards instructs him to play along with the spies to enable his department to break up the ring. Before leaving for Panama, Tracy learns that Nancy Kelly, with whom he had become friendly on the train to Los Angeles, was an Amer-



ican agent. In Panama, Tracy aided by Army Intelligence, deceives the spies by giving them false information. With the desired information in their hands, the spies plot to kill Tracy, but Nancy, who was posing as the Danish girl-friend of a Nazi spy, learns of the plot and enables Tracy to make a safe getaway. The spies, suspecting Nancy's friendship with Tracy, torture her to death in an unsuccessful attempt to make her talk. In San Francisco, Tracy, still feigning cooperation with the spies, boards a Japanese ship to deliver more information and discovers that Richard Loo, a Japanese-American posing as a cabin boy, was directing the spies' activities. The two engage in a murderous fight in which Tracy is killed just as the police arrive. His heroism, however, enables them to crack the espionage organization wide open.

Kenneth Gamet and Aubrey Wisberg wrote the screen play, Herman Schlom produced it, and William Berke directed it. The cast includes Regis Toomey and others.

### **"The Enchanted Cottage"** with Dorothy McGuire, Robert Young and Herbert Marshall

(RKO, no release date set; time, 92 min.)

First National made a silent version of this story in 1924 with Richard Barthelmess and May McAvoy. As was the case with that picture, this one, too, is a fine production with a particular appeal for the cultured element among picture-goers. Others, particularly children, may find it difficult to understand and appreciate either the psychological aspect of the story, or the visualization of mental impressions. While it cannot be considered a picture for the masses, it may go over with adult audiences, for the story, having been brought up to date, is timely, and the romance is an unusually appealing one. It should be said, however, that, since the story revolves around a veteran who returns from the war badly disfigured, many persons with loved ones in the service may find the subject matter too depressing. John Cromwell's direction is excellent, as is the acting of both the principal and featured players:—

Ordered overseas on his wedding day, Robert Young, a flier, postpones his marriage to Hillary Brooke. He crashes on his first flight, and the accident leaves him badly disfigured. Returning home, he finds that he cannot bear the distressing sympathy of both his family and his fiancée. He isolates himself in a small cottage owned by Mildred Natwick, where he had planned to spend his honeymoon because of its reputed enchantment for young married couples. There he meets Dorothy McGuire, a physically unattractive young spinster, who helped Miss Natwick care for the cottage. Through Dorothy, Young makes the acquaintance of Herbert Marshall, a blind pianist, who helps him regain confidence in himself. Grateful that Dorothy was not repelled by his appearance, and realizing that their lots were similar, Young asks her to marry him. Dorothy, deeply in love with him, consents. Under the spell of their deep love, each sees physical changes in the other, and they credit the phenomenon to the cottage's enchantment. Marshall, though blind, realized that their physical appearances had not changed, but he encourages them to enjoy their happiness. The transformation is so real to the young couple that they welcome a visit from Young's mother. But her tactless pity brings them to the realization that they had not changed. Marshall, however, convinces them that the illusion would never leave them because of their deep love for one another.

DeWitt Bodeen and Herman J. Manckiewicz wrote the expert screen play, and Harriet Parsons produced it. The cast includes Spring Byington, Richard Gaines and others.

### **"Circumstantial Evidence"** with Lloyd Nolan and Michael O'Shea

(20th Century-Fox, March; time, 68 min.)

This program melodrama should make a fairly good supporting feature. The story revolves around the efforts of a kindly postman to prove the innocence of his best friend, who had been convicted of murder on circumstantial evidence. In spite of the fact that what transpires is not always logical, it holds one's interest to a fair degree. Moreover, it has considerable human interest. A novel, though incredible, twist has the convicted man breaking out of jail unobserved only to find himself faced with the task of making his way back to his cell lest he lost the opportunity of being granted a new trial. The performances are good:—

Enraged when a surly merchant maltreats his young son (Billy Cummings), Michael O'Shea remonstrates with the man and demands that he return the boy's hatchet, which he had taken away from him. In a scuffle for the hatchet, the

man is killed when he trips and strikes his head against an obstacle. To those witnessing the fight it appeared as though O'Shea had struck the man with the hatchet. Protesting his innocence, O'Shea becomes panicky and prepares to leave town, but Lloyd Nolan, his old friend, compels him to remain and clear himself. At the trial, O'Shea is convicted on circumstantial evidence and sentenced to die. Stunned, O'Shea denounces his friend for interfering with his getaway. Nolan, despite O'Shea's animosity, keeps a watchful eye on his young son and tries desperately to obtain a new trial. His efforts, however, are to no avail. With but one week left before O'Shea goes to the chair, Nolan hits upon a scheme to save him. He organizes a boxing contest among a group of young boys, including the sons of the trial judge and the governor, and arranges for the boys' parents as well as the witnesses to attend the event. Under the guise of a quarrel, the sons of the judge and the governor re-enact the exact circumstances of the fight that had convicted O'Shea, with one of the boys falling to the ground. Immediately, eye-witnesses accuse one of the boys of striking the other with a hammer. The boys reveal the ruse and all present become convinced of how an accident can be mistaken for murder. Impressed, the governor decides to grant O'Shea a new trial. Meanwhile O'Shea had broken out of prison and had come to town for a last visit with his son, but when he learns of the new turn in events he finds himself faced with the problem of getting back to his cell lest his absence be discovered and his chance for a new trial ruined. He succeeds in re-entering the prison unobserved and, subsequently, is freed.

Robert Metzler wrote the screen play, William Girard produced it, and John Larkin directed it. The cast includes Trudy Marshall, Ruth Ford and others.

### **"Keep Your Powder Dry" with Lana Turner, Laraine Day and Susan Peters**

(MGM, March; time, 93 min.)

Undiscriminating audiences may find this service comedy-drama fairly entertaining, but those who are even the least bit discerning will probably find it quite ordinary and tiresome. In its favor is the marquee value of the players, but their talents are wasted on a plot that is artificial to the point of annoyance. The story, which revolves around the intense dislike and rivalry between two young women in the Womens Army Corps is made up of familiar ingredients and lacks depth. Their eventual reconciliation after a quarrel that almost costs them their commissions as officers, and their realization that duty to their country rises above personal matters, is a rehash of situations that have been done many times. In contrast to the constant bickering between Lana Turner and Laraine Day, Susan Peters, as their mutual friend, is cast as a reserved girl whose quiet heroism plays a major part in bringing the other two to their senses. But even her role is a synthetic one:—

Informed that she must prove herself worthy to gain her inheritance, Lana Turner, a wealthy playgirl, enlists in the WAC, planning to resign after receiving the money. At training camp, Laraine Day, daughter of a general, who had enlisted to keep the military tradition of her family unbroken, is openly contemptuous of Lana, sneering at the thought of a social butterfly making good in the WAC. Lana, angered, determines to match Laraine's prowess as a soldier. Susan Peters, who enlisted when her husband was sent overseas, becomes a self-appointed peacemaker between the two. After making good in Motor Transport, the three girls go on to Officers Candidate School. Lana and Laraine forget their animosity and become friends until Laraine learns of Lana's original motive for enlisting. Lana, now thoroughly patriotic and imbued with a desire to become an officer, fails to convince Laraine that her attitude had changed. Their enmity flares up anew, and Laraine determines that Lana shall not become an officer. While serving as deputy commander, Laraine goads Lana into disobeying orders, thus causing her to face dismissal from OCS. The commanding officer (Agnes Moorehead), however, understanding Laraine's motive, informs her that she herself was considered poor officer material. Both girls plan to resign. Meanwhile Susan, who had just learned of her husband's death, puts aside her own grief and tries to reason with them. In face of Susan's quiet heroism, the girls become ashamed of themselves. They ask the commanding officer for permission to remain in the Corps, even if only as enlisted women. Miss Moorehead, however, permits them to remain eligible for graduation from OCS.

Mary C. MacCall, Jr., and George Bruce wrote the screen play, George Haight produced it, and Edward Buzzell directed it.



"The effect of clearance upon the booking of pictures by subsequent-runs also was noted: 'The primary evil inherent in . . . any clearance is not that it suppresses competition for patronage but that it establishes a discriminatory sequence of exhibition which has no relation to the legitimate needs of the distributor or the public. What it does is simply to give the theatre enjoying the clearance booking control over the theatre against which it is held. The latter thus becomes entirely dependent upon the manner in which the former books pictures as they may not be made available in the second theatre until after they have been played in the first and this is true whether the clearance is one day or thirty days.'"

Mr. Myers discloses that, although the brief does not contain a suggested form of order to be entered, it does outline the substance of the requested relief, which, in short, is as follows:

1. The distributors should be prohibited from imposing "any clearance between theatres not in substantial competition with each other." Note that no distinction is made between independent theatres, affiliated theatres and large independent circuits.

2. The distributors should be prohibited from granting "any clearance between theatres charging substantially the same admission prices." Here again the prohibition applies to all classes of theatres.

3. There should be a "prohibition of all clearance in excess of that reasonably related to the maintenance of competition between two or more competing theatres charging different admission prices."

Mr. Myers then continues:

"The distributor may, as he frequently does, deal with the refusing to abolish all clearance in many cases where there was only trifling competition or where admission prices were the same, apparently assumed that this would be 'an unwarranted interference with the distributor's right to license the competing exhibitors on such runs as he may deem necessary to exploit his films properly.' The brief then goes on to say that the elimination of clearance does not necessarily involve a transfer of the run from one exhibitor to the other and, in this connection, includes a dissertation on 'open' booking, which exhibitors sometimes call 'catch-as-catch-can' booking."

"The distributor may, as he frequently does, deal with the two theatres upon an open booking basis; that is to say, permit each to book the films licensed for exhibition to his theatre without regard to the time at which they are exhibited in the other. The mere mechanics of booking films for exhibition from eight to ten different distributors, all of whom serve numerous customers with each positive print, may seldom permit the playing of the same film simultaneously in the two theatres, but they may be served without discrimination by supplying prints as the prints and playing time in the theatres involved become available. Thus the pictures released by a particular distributor may alternately be made available first to one theatre and then to the other so that at the end of the season, although they have never played the same pictures simultaneously, neither theatre has been relegated to a fixed inferior position by the distributor in question. Thus all that the elimination of clearance in a particular situation does is to permit service of prints to the theatres involved upon a non-discriminatory basis, if the distributor licenses them both. . . ."

"... In a Government of law special indulgences cannot indefinitely be granted to a particular group, no matter how influential it may be. And regardless of what disposition Judge Goddard may make of the motion on March 5, the motion and brief should accomplish three highly desirable ends:

- "1. The clear and frank disclosure of the fundamentals of the Government's suit should bring Judge Goddard to a realization of the seriousness of the proceeding.

- "2. Since notice of the motion was filed on counsel for all of the defendants, it will serve to bring the non-consenting defendants—Columbia, United Artists and Universal—back into the proceeding.

- "3. The motion, whether granted or denied, should result in setting the case for trial on the merits on a day certain."

It is, of course, usually most difficult to obtain from a court temporary relief so extraordinary as the relief sought in this case. But whether the temporary relief should be granted or not, the Department of Justice has done a remarkable piece of work in behalf of free competition in the industry, and the independent exhibitor has been given a new hope for ultimate victory in the pending suit.

## "Crime, Incorporated" with Leo Carrillo, Tom Neal and Martha Tilton

(PRC, April 15; time, 75 min.)

The followers of gangster pictures should find this program melodrama to their liking. The story, which is based on an original by associate producer Martin Mooney and which in many ways parallels his own experiences as a crime reporter, revolves around the machinations of a crime syndicate headed by outwardly respectable business men, and around the efforts of the police to break up their "rackets." It has all the ingredients generally found in pictures of this type—suspense, cold-blooded killings, grand jury investigations, gang warfare and other similar activities. Although the ending is quite obvious, one's interest is held fairly well. There is a pleasant but unimportant romantic angle. The action takes place during the prohibition era:—

Defying the crime syndicate's dictum to join up with them, Danny Morton, extortionist and leader of a small "mob," kidnaps Leo Carrillo, one of the syndicate's heads, and compels the organized crime ring to pay \$100,000 for his release. Morton, concerned over the welfare of his young sister (Martha Tilton) in the event he met sudden death, asks Tom Neal, a crime reporter, to watch over her, offering to help him expose the secret leaders of the syndicate in return for his favor. Neal, who had been waging a one-man war against crime, accepts. Through Morton, Neal learns that Lionel Atwill, a celebrated criminal lawyer, was one of the secret leaders, and, through other information furnished by Morton, he writes a book titled, "Crime, Inc." Shortly after, the syndicate murders Morton. His killing precipitates a crusade against crime, and the governor appoints a special grand jury to investigate. Neal's book is so sensational that he is hailed before the jury to reveal the source of his information. True to newspaper ethics, he refuses to reveal the source, but he joins a secret committee organized by the police commissioner (Harry Shannon) to break up the syndicate. Through information furnished him by Neal, the commissioner becomes aware of corruption within his own department and, through the use of dictaphones and camera traps, is enabled to arrest the syndicate's leaders when they assemble for one of their "board" meetings. The organized crime ring smashed, the jury thanks Neal for his cooperation and all the members act as witnesses to his marriage to Martha.

Ray Shrock wrote the screen play, Leon Fromkess produced it, and Lew Landers directed it. The cast includes Sheldon Leonard, Grant Mitchell, George Meeker and others.

## "Her Lucky Night" with Andrews Sisters, Martha O'Driscoll and Noah Beery, Jr.

(Universal, Feb. 9; time, 63 min.)

Just a minor program comedy with music. The story is rather silly, but it manages to provoke a few laughs in certain situations. A good part of the comedy is slapstick, with one particularly ridiculous sequence taking place in a night-club, where the hero's dress suit keeps coming apart as he cavorts about the place. Because of the story's silliness, there is no human interest. Its chief attraction is the harmony singing of the Andrews Sisters:—

Despite the scoffing of the Andrews Sisters, her co-workers in a night-club, Martha O'Driscoll decides to visit a fortune teller to learn of her romantic future. When the fortune teller informs her that she will find her true love sitting next to her in a motion picture theatre, Martha buys two reserved tickets to a local movie and tosses one out of a window in the hope that it would be picked up by her future boyfriend. Martha becomes so disappointed when George Barbier, a grumpy but wealthy realtor, occupies the seat next to her that she starts a row with him. Barbier, learning the cause of her disappointment and impressed with her spirit, employs her to investigate Noah Beery, Jr., his nephew and sole heir; Barbier wanted to find out if he was a capable person. Beery, a shy, bungling young man, innocently gets himself into many predicaments, incurring Barbier's wrath. Martha, however, falls in love with him, and with the aid of the Andrews Sisters and of the fortune teller she manages to save Beery from disinheritance by his uncle.

Clyde Bruckman wrote the screen play, Warren Wilson produced it, and Edward Lilley directed it. The cast includes Olin Howlin, Maurice Cass and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXVII

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1945

No. 7

(Partial Index No. 1—Pages 2 to 24 Incl.)

Titles of Pictures	Reviewed on Page
Beyond the Pecos—Universal (59 min.)	not reviewed
Big Bonanza, The—Republic (69 min.)	6
Big Show-Off, The—Republic (70 min.)	10
Castle of Crimes—PRC (60 min.)	2
Chicago Kid, The—Republic (68 min.)	22
Eadie Was a Lady—Columbia (67 min.)	11
Forever Yours—Monogram (see "They Shall Have Faith")	2
Great Flamarion, The—Republic (78 min.)	10
Great Stage Coach Robbery, The—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
Grissley's Millions—Republic (72 min.)	6
Gun Smoke—Monogram (59 min.)	not reviewed
Hangover Square—20th Century-Fox (77 min.)	10
Here Come the Co-Eds—Universal (87 min.)	19
His Brother's Ghost—PRC (56 min.)	not reviewed
I Love a Mystery—Columbia (69 min.)	18
It's in the Bag—United Artists (87 min.)	23
Jade Mask, The—Monogram (66 min.)	14
Kid Sister, The—PRC (55 min.)	23
Leave it to Blondie—Columbia (73 min.)	22
Let's Go Steady—Columbia (60 min.)	6
Mr. Emmanuel—United Artists (92 min.)	7
Objective Burma—Warner Bros. (142 min.)	14
Rogues Gallery—PRC (58 min.)	3
Roughly Speaking—Warner Bros. (128 min.)	18
Sage Brush Heroes—Columbia (54 m.)	not reviewed
Sergeant Mike—Columbia (60 min.)	22
Shadows of Death—PRC (56 min.)	not reviewed
She Get's Her Man—Universal (74 min.)	7
Sing Me a Song of Texas—Columbia (66 m.)	not reviewed
Song to Remember, A—Columbia (113 min.)	11
They Shall Have Faith—Monogram (83 min.)	2
This Man's Navy—MGM (100 min.)	3
Thoroughbreds—Republic (55 min.)	14
Thunderhead—Son of Flicka—20th Century-Fox (78 min.)	19
Tonight and Every Night—Columbia (92 min.)	15
Topeka Terror, The—Republic (55 min.)	not reviewed
Tree Grows in Brooklyn, A—20th Century-Fox (128 min.)	15
Under Western Skies—Universal (57 min.)	2
What a Blonde—RKO (71 min.)	18

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

## Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

6032	She's a Sweetheart—Frazee-Parks	Dec. 7
6038	Dancing in Manhattan—Donnell-Brady	Dec. 14
6203	Saddle Leather Law—Starrett (55 m.)	Dec. 21
6003	Together Again—Boyer-Dunne	Dec. 22
6025	Tahiti Nights—Falkenburg-O'Brien	Dec. 28
6039	Let's Go Steady—Parrish-Moran	Jan. 4
6041	Youth on Trial—Collins-Reed	Jan. 11
6014	Eadie Was a Lady—Miller-Besser	Jan. 18
6024	I Love a Mystery—Bannon-Foch	Jan. 25
6204	Sage Brush Heroes—Starrett (54 m.)	Feb. 1
6221	Sing Me a Song of Texas—Lane (66 m.)	Feb. 8
	Tonight and Every Night—Hayworth-Bowman	Feb. 22

	Leave it to Blondie—Lake-Singleton	Feb. 22
	Crime Doctor's Courage—Baxter-Crane	Feb. 27
	A Song to Remember—Muni-Oberon	Mar. 1
	Rough Ridin' Justice—Starrett	Mar. 5
	A Guy, A Gal and a Pal—Hunter-Merrick	Mar. 8
	Rough, Tough and Ready—McLaglen-Morris	Mar. 22

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

## Block 9

501	The Seventh Cross—Tracy-Gurie	September
502	Barbary Coast Gent—Beery	September
503	Waterloo Bridge—Taylor-Leigh (reissue)	September
504	Maisie Goes to Reno—Sothern-Hodiak	September
505	Marriage is a Private Affair—Turner-Craig	October
506	Kismet—Dietrich-Colman	October
507	Mrs. Parkington—Pidgeon-Garson	November
508	Naughty Marietta—MacDonald-Eddy (reissue)	November
510	An American Romance—Donlevy	November
509	Lost in a Harem—Abbott & Costello	December

## Block 10

513	The Thin Man Goes Home—Powell-Loy	January
514	Main Street After Dark—Arnold	January
515	Music for Millions—O'Brien-Allyson	February
516	Blonde Fever—Astor-Dorn	February
517	This Man's Navy—Beery-Drake	February
518	Between Two Women—Johnson-Barrymore	March
519	Nothing But Trouble—Laurel & Hardy	March
520	Keep Your Powder Dry—Peters-Turner-Day	March

## Specials

500	Dragon Seed—Hepburn-Huston	August
511	Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo—Tracy-Johnson	January
512	Meet Me in St. Louis—Garland-O'Brien	January
	National Velvet—Rooney-Taylor	Not set

## Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

461	Song of the Range—Wakely (57 m.)	Dec. 1
421	Crazy Knights—Gilbert-Howard	Dec. 8
416	Shadow of Suspicion—Weaver-Cookson	Dec. 15
403	Alaska—Taylor-Lindsay	Dec. 22
409	Bowery Champs—East Side Kids	Dec. 29
455	Navajo Trail—J. M. Brown	Jan. 5
414	Army Wives—Knox-Rambeau	Jan. 12
420	Adventures of Kitty O'Day—Parker-Cookson	Jan. 19
417	The Jade Mask—Sidney Toler	Jan. 26
401	Forever Yours—Storm-Brown (Formerly "They Shall Have Faith")	Jan. 26
429	The Cisco Kid Returns—Renaldo	Feb. 9
454	Gun Smoke—J. M. Brown (59 m.)	Feb. 16
	There Goes Kelly—Moran-McKay	Feb. 16
	Dillinger—Tierney-Lowe	Feb. 23
	Fashion Model—Lowery-Weaver	Mar. 2
	G. I. Honeymoon—Storm-Cookson (reset)	Mar. 9

**Paramount Features**

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

**Block 3**

- 4411 Here Come the Waves—Crosby-Hutton.....  
 4412 Dangerous Passage—Lowery-Brooks.....  
 4413 For Whom the Bell Tolls—Cooper-Bergman.....  
 4414 Practically Yours—Colbert-MacMurray.....  
 4415 Double Exposure—Morris-Kelly.....

**Block 4**

- 4416 Bring on the Girls—Tufts-Bracken-Lake.....  
 4417 The Unseen—McCrea-Russell.....  
 4418 Salty O'Rourke—Ladd-Russell.....  
 4419 High Powered—Lowery-Brooks.....

**Special**

- 4432 Sign of the Cross—Reissue.....

**PRC Pictures, Inc. Features**

(625 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

- 512 I Accuse My Parents—Hughes-Lowell.....Nov. 4  
 552 Dead or Alive—Texas Rangers (56 m.).....Nov. 9  
 506 Bluebeard—Carradine-Parker.....Nov. 11  
 511 The Great Mike—Erwin-Henry.....Nov. 15  
 514 Rogues' Gallery—Jenks-Raymond.....Dec. 6  
 556 Oath of Vengeance—Buster Crabbe (57 m.).....Dec. 9  
 501 The Town Went Wild—Lydon-Bartholomew.....Dec. 15  
 513 Castle of Crimes—English-made.....Dec. 22  
 553 The Whispering Skull—Texas Rangers (56m.).....Dec. 29  
 557 His Brother's Ghost—Buster Crabbe (56 m.).....Feb. 3  
 521 The Kid Sister—Pryor-Clark.....Feb. 6  
 554 Marked for Murder—Texas Rangers (58 m.).....Feb. 8  
 523 The Spell of Amy Nugent—English cast.....Feb. 10  
 516 Fog Island—Atwill-Zucco (reset).....Feb. 15  
 515 Hollywood & Vine—Ellison-McKay.....Mar. 1  
 507 The Man Who Walked Alone—O'Brien-Aldridge  
 (reset).....Mar. 15  
 Shadows of Death—Crabbe (56 m.).....Mar. 24  
 Strange Illusion—Lydon-William (re.).....Mar. 31  
 Crime, Inc.—Tilton-Neal (reset).....Apr. 15

**Republic Features**

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

**1943-44**

- 3308 Red River Valley—Autry (reissue).....Dec. 1  
 (End of season)

**Beginning of 1944-45 Season**

- 3311 Tucson Raiders—Elliott-Hayes (55 m.).....May 14  
 3312 Marshal of Reno—Elliott-Blake (56 m.).....July 2  
 461 Silver City Kid—Lane-Stewart (55 m.).....July 20  
 451 Bordertown Trail—Burnette-Carson (56m.).....Aug. 11  
 401 Sing, Neighbor, Sing—Taylor-Terry.....Aug. 12  
 3313 San Antonio Kid—Elliott-Stirling (56 m.).....Aug. 16  
 462 Stagecoach to Monterey—Lane-Stewart  
 (55 m.).....Sept. 15  
 3314 Cheyenne Wildcat—Elliott-Blake (56 m.).....Sept. 30  
 452 Code of the Prairie—Burnette-Carson (56m.).....Oct. 6  
 403 My Buddy—Barry-Terry.....Oct. 12  
 463 Sheriff of Sundown—Lane-Stirling (56 m.).....Nov. 7  
 402 End of the Road—Norris-Abbott.....Nov. 10  
 3315 Vigilantes of Dodge City—Elliott (55 m.).....Nov. 15  
 404 Faces in the Fog—Withers-Kelly.....Nov. 30  
 405 Brazil—Guizar-Bruce.....Nov. 30  
 453 Firebrands of Arizona—Burnette-Carson  
 (56 m.).....Dec. 1  
 408 Thoroughbreds—Neal-Mara.....Dec. 23  
 406 Lake Placid Serenade—Ralston.....Dec. 23  
 407 The Big Bonanza—Arlen-Livingston.....Dec. 30  
 3316 Sheriff of Las Vegas—Elliott-Blake (55 m.).....Dec. 31  
 409 Grissly's Million's—Kelly-Grey.....Jan. 16  
 410 The Big Show-Off—Lake-Dale.....Jan. 22  
 464 The Topeka Terror—Lane-Stirling (55 m.).....Jan. 26  
 3317 Great Stage Coach Robbery—Elliott (56 m.).....Feb. 15  
 411 A Song for Miss Julie—Dolin-Markova.....Feb. 19

**RKO Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No National Release Dates)

**Block 2**

- 506 Girl Rush—Carney-Brown.....  
 507 Falcon in Hollywood—Conway-Borg.....  
 508 Murder, My Sweet—Powell-Shirley (formerly  
 "Farewell, My Lovely").....  
 509 Nevada—Mitchum-Jeffreys.....  
 510 Experiment Perilous—Lamar-Brent.....

**Block 3**

- 511 What a Blonde—Errol-Borg.....  
 512 Betrayal from the East—Tracy-Kelly.....  
 513 Pan Americana—Terry-Arden.....  
 514 Having a Wonderful Crime—O'Brien-Landis.....  
 515 The Enchanted Cottage—Young-McGuire.....

**Specials**

- 551 The Princess and the Pirate—Bob Hope.....  
 581 Casanova Brown—Cooper-Wright.....  
 582 Woman in the Window—Bennett-Robinson.....  
 583 Belle of the Yukon—Scott-Lee.....  
 584 It's a Pleasure—Henie-O'Shea.....  
 591 The Three Caballeros—Disney.....

**Twentieth Century-Fox Features**

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

**Block 5**

- 512 Winged Victory—McCallister-O'Brien....December  
 513 Sunday Dinner for a Soldier—Baxter

**Hodiak.....December**

(NOTE: Beginning with January, the practice of designating releases by blocks has been discontinued.)

- 514 Keys of the Kingdom—Peck-Mitchell.....January  
 511 The Way Ahead—David Niven.....January  
 515 The Fighting Lady—Documentary.....January  
 516 Hangover Square—Cregar-Darnell.....February  
 517 A Tree Grows in Brooklyn—McGuire-Dunn.....February  
 518 Thunderhead—Son of Flicka—McDowall.....March  
 519 Circumstantial Evidence—Nolan-O'Shea.....March

**United Artists Features**

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- Since You Went Away—All star cast.....Special  
 Dark Waters—Oberon-Tone.....Nov. 10  
 3 Is a Family—Ruggles-Broderick.....Nov. 23  
 Guest in the House—Baxter-Bellamy.....Dec. 8  
 Tomorrow, the World—March-Field.....Dec. 29  
 I'll Be Seeing You—Rogers-Cotten-Temple.....Jan. 5  
 Mr. Emmanuel—English-made.....Jan. 19  
 It's in the Bag—Fred Allen.....Not set

**Universal Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

- 9037 My Gal Loves Music—Crosby-McDonald...Dec. 15  
 9082 The Old Texas Trail—Cameron-Dew (59m.).....Dec. 15  
 9023 Destiny—Jean-Curtis.....Dec. 22  
 9071 Can't Help Singing—Durbin-Paige.....Dec. 29  
 9035 Night Club Girl—Austin-Norris.....Jan. 5  
 9020 She Gets Her Man—Davis-Errol.....Jan. 12  
 9039 Under Western Skies—O'Driscoll-Beery, Jr.....Jan. 19  
 9010 The Suspect—Laughton-Raines.....Jan. 26  
 9002 Here Come the Co-Eds—Abbott-Costello...Feb. 2  
 Her Lucky Night—Andrews Sisters.....Feb. 9  
 9013 House of Frankenstein—Karloff-Chaney.....Feb. 16  
 9036 The Mummy's Curse—Lon Chaney.....Feb. 16  
 9083 Beyond the Pecos—Rod Cameron (59 m.).....Feb. 23  
 Frisco Sal—Bey-Foster-Curtis.....Feb. 23  
 Sudan—Montez-Hall-Bey.....Mar. 2  
 See My Lawyer—Olsen & Johnson.....Mar. 9  
 The House of Fear—Rathbone-Bruce.....Mar. 16  
 I'll Remember April—Jean-Grant.....Mar. 23  
 Swing Out Sister—Cameron-Burke.....Mar. 30  
 Honeymoon Ahead—Jones-McDonald.....Apr. 13  
 Salome Where She Danced—DeCarlo-Bruce.....Apr. 20  
 I'll Tell the World—Tracy-Joyce.....Apr. 27  
 The Naughty Nineties—Abbott & Costello...May 4  
 Blonde Ransom—Grey-Cook.....May 11  
 Penthouse Rhythm—Collier-Norris.....May 18  
 That's the Spirit—Oakie-Ryan.....May 25



**Warner Bros. Features**

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

- 406 The Very Thought of You—Morgan-Parker. Nov. 11  
 407 The Doughgirls—Sheridan-Carson. Nov. 25  
 409 Hollywood Canteen—All star cast. Dec. 30  
 410 To Have and Have Not—Bogart-Bacall. Jan. 20  
 411 Objective Burma—Errol Flynn. Feb. 17  
 412 Roughly Speaking—Russell-Carson. Mar. 3  
 413 Hotel Berlin—Emerson-Dantine. Mar. 17

**SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE****Columbia—One Reel**

- 6654 Community Sings No. 4 (9 m.). Dec. 1  
 6953 Rootin' Tootin' Band—Film Vodvil (11 m.). Dec. 8  
 5657 Christmas Carols—Com. Sings (reissue) (10½ m.). Dec. 8  
 6804 Striking Champions—Sports (10 m.). Dec. 22  
 6855 Screen Snapshots No. 5 (10 m.). Dec. 28  
 6655 Community Sings No. 5 (9 m.). Jan. 1  
 6501 Dog, Cat & Canary—Col. Rhap. (6 m.). Jan. 5  
 6856 Screen Snapshots No. 6 (9 m.). Jan. 26  
 6805 Kings of the Fairway—Sports (10 m.). Feb. 2  
 6954 Korn Kobbler—Film Vodvil (11 m.). Feb. 2  
 6656 Community Sings No. 6 (10 m.). Feb. 9  
 6602 Kickapoo Juice—Li'l Abner (7 m.) (re.). Feb. 23  
 6857 Screen Snapshots No. 7 (9 m.). Feb. 25  
 6806 Rough and Tumble—Sports. Mar. 2  
 6752 The Egg Yegg—Fox & Crow (7½ m.) (re.). Mar. 2  
 6502 Rippling Rhapsody—Col. Rhap. (reset). Mar. 8  
 6657 Community Sings No. 7. Mar. 15  
 6703 Goofy News Views—Phantasy. Mar. 23  
 6858 Screen Snapshots No. 8. Mar. 29  
 6753 Kukumuts—Fox & Crow. Mar. 30  
 6503 Fiesta Time—Color Rhapsody. Apr. 4

**Columbia—Two Reels**

- 6127 The Vanishing Dagger—Black Arrow No. 8 (15 m.). Dec. 8  
 6128 Escape from Death—Black Arrow No. 9 (15 m.). Dec. 8  
 6429 Heather and Yon—Clyde (17 m.). Dec. 15  
 6129 The Gold Cache—Black Arrow No. 10 (15 m.). Dec. 22  
 6130 Curse of the Killer—Black Arrow No. 11 (15 m.). Dec. 29  
 6422 She Snoops to Conquer—V. Vague. Dec. 29  
 6131 Test by Torture—Black Arrow No. 12 (15 m.). Jan. 5  
 6410 Woo, Woo!—Hugh Herbert (16 m.). Jan. 5  
 6132 Sign of Evil—Black Arrow No. 13 (15 m.). Jan. 12  
 6133 An Indian's Revenge—Black Arrow No. 14 (15 m.). Jan. 19  
 6403 Three Pests in a Mess—Stooges (15 m.). Jan. 19  
 6134 The Black Arrow Triumphs—Black Arrow No. 15 (15 m.). Jan. 26  
 6430 Snooper Service—Brendel (14½ m.). Feb. 2  
 6431 Off Again, On Again—Howard (16 m.). Feb. 16  
 6432 Two Local Yokels—Clyde. Mar. 2  
 6404 Booby Dupes—Stooges (17 m.). Mar. 17  
 6433 Pistol Packin' Nitwits—Brendel. Apr. 4

**Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel****1943-44**

- K-574 A Lady Fights Back—Pass. Par. (10 m.). Nov. 11  
 S-558 Safety Sleuth—Pete Smith (9 m.). Nov. 25  
 T-522 Wandering Here and There—Travel. (9m.). Dec. 9  
 W-541 Mouse Trouble—Cartoon (7 m.). Dec. 23  
 W-542 Barney Bear's Polar Pet—Cartoon (7 m.). Dec. 30  
 W-543 Screwy Truant—Cartoon (7 m.). Jan. 13  
 W-544 The Unwelcome Guest—Cartoon. Feb. 17  
 (More to come)

**Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels****1943-44**

- A-501 Dark Shadows—Special (22 m.). Dec. 16  
 (More to come)

**Paramount—One Reel**

- U4-2 Two Gun Rusty—Puppetoon (7½ m.). Dec. 1  
 E4-1 She-Sick Sailors—Popeye (7 m.). Dec. 8  
 R4-3 Long Shots and Favorites—Sport. (9 m.). Dec. 8  
 P4-2 Gabriel Churchkitten—Noveltoon (7 m.). Dec. 15  
 J4-2 Popular Science No. 2 (10 m.). Dec. 22  
 D4-2 Birthday Party—Little Lulu (9 m.). Dec. 29  
 U4-3 Hot Lip Jasper—Puppetoon (7 m.). Jan. 5  
 L4-2 Unusual Occupations No. 2 (10 m.). Jan. 12  
 Y4-2 Who's Who in Animal Land—Speaking of Animals (9 m.). Jan. 19  
 R4-4 Out Fishin'—Sportlight (9 m.). Jan. 26  
 E4-2 Pop-Pie-Ala-Mode—Popeye (7 m.). Jan. 26  
 P4-3 When G. I. Johnny Comes Home—Noveltoon (8 m.). Feb. 2  
 J4-3 Popular Science No. 3. Feb. 16  
 R4-5 Blue Winners—Sportlight (re.). Feb. 23  
 D4-3 Beau Ties—Little Lulu. Mar. 2  
 P4-4 Scrappily Married—Noveltoon. Mar. 3  
 L4-3 Unusual Occupations No. 3 (10 m.). Mar. 9  
 Y4-3 In the Public Eye—Speak. of Animals (8m.). Mar. 16  
 E4-3 Tops in the Big Top—Popeye. Mar. 16  
 U4-4 Jasper Tell—Puppetoon (8 m.). Mar. 23  
 R4-6 Game Bag—Sportlight (9 m.). Mar. 30

**Paramount—Two Reels**

- FF4-1 Bonnie Lassie—Musical Parade (19 m.). Oct. 6  
 FF4-2 Star Bright—Musical Parade (20 m.). Dec. 15  
 FF4-3 Bombalera—Musical Parade (20 m.). Feb. 9

**Republic—Two Reels**

- 481 Zorro's Black Whip—Lewis-Stirling (12 episodes). Dec. 16  
 482 Manhunt of Mystery Island—Bailey-Stirling (15 episodes). Mar. 8

**RKO—One Reel**

- 54302 School for Dogs—Sportscope (8 m.). Oct. 6  
 54202 Flicker Flashbacks No. 2 (7½ m.). Oct. 27  
 54303 Saddle Starlets—Sportscope (8 m.). Nov. 3  
 54304 Parallel Skiing—Sportscope (8 m.). Dec. 1  
 54105 Donald's Off Day—Disney (7 m.). Dec. 8  
 54203 Flicker Flashbacks No. 3 (9 m.). Dec. 8  
 54305 Five Star Bowlers—Sportscope (8 m.). Dec. 29  
 54106 Tiger Trouble—Disney (7 m.). Jan. 5  
 54204 Flicker Flashbacks No. 4 (9 m.). Jan. 19  
 54107 The Clock Watcher—Disney (8 m.). Jan. 26

**RKO—Two Reels**

- 53202 Swing It—Headliners (16 m.). Oct. 20  
 53401 Go Feather Your Nest—Edgar Kennedy (17 m.). Oct. 23  
 53702 He Forgot to Remember—Leon Errol (17m.). Oct. 27  
 53101 West Point—This is America (17 m.). Nov. 17  
 53203 Swing Vacation—Headliners (19 m.). Dec. 1  
 53102 New Americans—This is America (19½m.). Dec. 15  
 53402 Ali Baba—Edgar Kennedy (18 m.). Jan. 5  
 53103 Power Unlimited—This is America (17 m.). Jan. 19  
 53702 Birthday Blues—Leon Errol (17 m.). Feb. 16

**Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel**

- 5507 Gandy's Dream Girl—Terrytoon (7 m.). Dec. 8  
 5352 Trolling for Strikes—Sports (8 m.). Dec. 15  
 5508 Dear Old Switzerland—Terrytoon (7 m.). Dec. 22  
 5257 Canyons of the Sun—Adventure (8 m.). Jan. 5  
 5509 Mighty Mouse & the Pirate—Terry. (6 m.). Jan. 12  
 5302 Steppin' Pretty—Sports. (8 m.). Jan. 19  
 5510 Port of Missing Mice—Terrytoon. Feb. 2  
 5353 Nova Scotia—Sports (8 m.). Feb. 9  
 5511 Ants in Your Pantry—Terrytoon. Feb. 16  
 5255 City of Paradox—Adventure (8 m.). Mar. 2  
 5512 Raiding the Raiders—Terrytoon. Mar. 9  
 5256 Alaskan Grandeur—Adventure (8 m.). Mar. 16  
 5513 Post War Inventions—Terrytoon. Mar. 23  
 5514 Fisherman's Luck—Terrytoon. Mar. 30  
 5902 Good Old Days—Lew Lehr. Apr. 6  
 5515 Mighty Mouse & the Kilkenny Cats—Terrytoon. Apr. 13  
 5258 Land of 10,000 Lakes—Adventure (8 m.). Apr. 27  
 5516 Mother Goose—Nightmare—Terrytoon. May 4

**Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels**

- Vol. 11 No. 3—Uncle Sam, Mariner—March of Time (16 m.) ..... Nov. 3  
 Vol. 11 No. 4—Inside China Today—March of Time (17½ m.) ..... Dec. 1  
 Vol. 11 No. 5—The Unknown Battle—March of Time (18½ m.) ..... Dec. 29  
 Vol. 11 No. 6—Report on Italy—March of Time (17 m.) ..... Jan. 26

**Universal—One Reel**

- 9353 Mr. Chimp at Coney Island—Var. Views (9 m.) (reset) ..... Dec. 11  
 9372 One Man Newspaper—Per. Odd. (9m) (re.) Dec. 18  
 9235 Painter and the Pointer—Cartune (7 m.) ..... Dec. 18  
 9234 Pied Piper of Basin St.—Cartune (7 m.) ..... Jan. 15  
 9373 ABC Pin-up—Per. Odd. (9 m.) ..... Jan. 15  
 9374 Pigtail Pilot—Per. Odd. (9 m.) ..... Jan. 22  
 9354 White Treasure—Var. Views (9 m.) ..... Jan. 29  
 9236 Chew Chew Baby—Cartune (7 m.) ..... Feb. 5

**Universal—Two Reels**

- 9693 The Boomerang—River Boat No. 13 (17 m.) Jan. 10  
 9124 Jive Busters—Musical (15 m.) ..... Jan. 17  
 9581 Invitation to Death—Jungle Queen No. 1 (17 m.) ..... Jan. 23  
 9582 Jungle Sacrifice—Jungle Queen No. 2 (17m) Jan. 30  
 9583 The Flaming Mountain—Jungle Queen No. 3 (17 m.) ..... Feb. 6  
 9584 Wild Cats Stampede—Jungle Queen No. 4 (17 m.) ..... Feb. 13  
 9125 Melody Parade—Musical (15 m.) ..... Feb. 14  
 9585 The Burning Jungle—Jungle Queen No. 5 (17 m.) ..... Feb. 20  
 9586 Danger Ship—Jungle Queen No. 6 (17 m.) Feb. 27  
 9126 Swing Serenade—Musical (15 m.) ..... Feb. 28  
 9587 Trip Wire Murder—Jungle Queen No. 7 (17 m.) ..... Mar. 6  
 9588 The Mortar Bomb—Jungle Queen No. 8 (17 m.) ..... Mar. 13  
 9589 Death Watch—Jungle Queen No. 9 (17 m.) Mar. 20  
 9590 Execution Chamber—Jungle Queen (17 m.) Mar. 27  
 9591 The Trail to Doom—Jungle Queen (17 m.) Apr. 3  
 9592 Dragged Under—Jungle Queen (17 m.) Apr. 10  
 9593 The Secret of the Sword—Jungle Queen (17 m.) ..... Apr. 17

**Vitaphone—One Reel**

- 1305 Plenty of Money & You—Hit Par. (7 m.) ..... Dec. 9  
 1605 Jammin' the Blues—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) ..... Dec. 16  
 1501 California Here We Are—Sports (re.) (10m) Dec. 16  
 1502 Birds & Beasts Were There—Sports (10 m.) Dec. 30  
 1721 Herr Meets Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.) ..... Jan. 13  
 1503 Glamour in Sports—Sports (10 m.) ..... Jan. 13  
 1306 Fella with a Fiddle—Hit. Par. (7 m.) ..... Jan. 20  
 1606 Rhythm of the Rhumba—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) Jan. 27  
 1701 Draftee Daffy—Looney Tune (7 m.) ..... Jan. 27  
 1504 Bikes and Skis—Sports (10 m.) ..... Feb. 10  
 1722 Unruly Hare—Bugs Bunny (re.) (7 m.) ..... Feb. 10  
 1307 When I Yoo Hoo—Hit Parade (7 m.) ..... Feb. 24  
 1702 Trap Happy Porky—Looney Tune (7 m.) ..... Feb. 24  
 1505 Cuba Calling—Sports (10 m.) ..... Mar. 10  
 1404 Overseas Roundup—Varieties (10 m.) ..... Mar. 17  
 1308 I Only Have Eyes for You—Hit Par. (7 m.) Mar. 17  
 1607 Musical Mexico—Merrie Melody (7 m.) ..... Mar. 24  
 1703 Life with Feathers—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) ..... Mar. 24

**Vitaphone—Two Reels**

- 1104 I Won't Play—Featurette (20 m.) ..... Nov. 11  
 1105 Nautical but Nice—Featurette (20 m.) ..... Dec. 2  
 1101 I Am An American—Featurette (20 m.) ..... Dec. 23  
 1002 Beachhead to Berlin—Special (20 m.) ..... Jan. 6  
 1106 Congo—Featurette (20 m.) (reset) ..... Feb. 17  
 1003 Pledge to Bataan—Special (20 m.) (re.) ..... Feb. 3  
 1107 Navy Nurse—Featurette (20 m.) ..... Mar. 3  
 1004 Coney Island Honeymoon—Special (20 m.) Mar. 31

**NEWSWEEKLY****NEW YORK****RELEASE DATES****Pathe News**

- 55151 Sat. (O) ... Feb. 17  
 55252 Wed. (E) .. Feb. 21  
 55153 Sat. (O) ... Feb. 24  
 55254 Wed. (E) .. Feb. 28  
 55155 Sat. (O) .. Mar. 3  
 55256 Wed. (E) .. Mar. 7  
 55157 Sat. (O) .. Mar. 10  
 55258 Wed. (E) .. Mar. 14  
 55159 Sat. (O) .. Mar. 17  
 55260 Wed. (E) .. Mar. 21  
 55161 Sat. (O) .. Mar. 24  
 55262 Wed. (E) .. Mar. 28  
 55163 Sat. (O) .. Mar. 31  
 55264 Wed. (E) .. Apr. 4

**Metrotone News**

- 247 Tues. (O) .... Feb. 20  
 248 Thurs. (E) ... Feb. 22  
 249 Tues. (O) .... Feb. 27  
 250 Thurs. (E) ... Mar. 1  
 251 Tues. (O) ... Mar. 6  
 252 Thurs. (E) ... Mar. 8  
 253 Tues. (O) ... Mar. 13  
 254 Thurs. (E) ... Mar. 15  
 255 Tues. (O) ... Mar. 20  
 256 Thurs. (E) ... Mar. 22  
 257 Tues. (O) ... Mar. 27  
 258 Thurs. (E) ... Mar. 29  
 259 Tues. (O) .... Apr. 3

**Paramount News**

- 49 Sunday (O) ... Feb. 18  
 50 Thurs. (E) .... Feb. 22  
 51 Sunday (O) ... Feb. 25  
 52 Thurs. (E) .... Mar. 1  
 53 Sunday (O) ... Mar. 4  
 54 Thurs. (E) .... Mar. 8  
 55 Sunday (O) ... Mar. 11  
 56 Thurs. (E) .... Mar. 15  
 57 Sunday (O) ... Mar. 18  
 58 Thurs. (E) .... Mar. 22  
 59 Sunday (O) ... Mar. 25  
 60 Thurs. (E) .... Mar. 29  
 61 Sunday (O) ... Apr. 1

**Universal**

- 373 Tues. (O) .... Feb. 20  
 374 Thurs. (E) ... Feb. 22  
 375 Tues. (O) .... Feb. 27  
 376 Thurs. (E) ... Mar. 1  
 377 Tues. (O) ... Mar. 6  
 378 Thurs. (E) ... Mar. 8  
 379 Tues. (O) ... Mar. 13  
 380 Thurs. (E) ... Mar. 15  
 381 Tues. (O) ... Mar. 20  
 382 Thurs. (E) ... Mar. 22  
 383 Tues. (O) ... Mar. 27  
 384 Thurs. (E) ... Mar. 29  
 385 Tues. (O) ... Apr. 3

**Fox Movietone**

- 49 Tues. (O) .... Feb. 20  
 50 Thurs. (E) .... Feb. 22  
 51 Tues. (O) .... Feb. 27  
 52 Thurs. (E) .... Mar. 1  
 53 Tues. (O) .... Mar. 6  
 54 Thurs. (E) .... Mar. 8  
 55 Tues. (O) .... Mar. 13  
 56 Thurs. (E) .... Mar. 15  
 57 Tues. (O) .... Mar. 20  
 58 Thurs. (E) .... Mar. 22  
 59 Tues. (O) .... Mar. 27  
 60 Thurs. (E) .... Mar. 29  
 61 Tues. (O) .... Apr. 3

**All American News**

- 121 Friday ..... Feb. 16  
 122 Friday ..... Feb. 23  
 123 Friday ..... Mar. 2  
 124 Friday ..... Mar. 9  
 125 Friday ..... Mar. 16  
 126 Friday ..... Mar. 23  
 127 Friday ..... Mar. 30  
 128 Friday ..... Apr. 6



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## Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions.	16.50
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35c a Copy	

1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1945

No. 8

### HERE AND THERE

MR. DEWEY ANDERSON, counsel for the U.S. Senate Small Business Committee, is reported to have announced that the Committee will, in the near future, institute an investigation of the motion picture industry to determine whether independents in all branches of the industry are being forced out of business by monopolies.

If this Committee's sole purpose is to learn whether or not the small independents are being affected by monopolistic practices, then all it has to do is to send an inquiry to the Department of Justice, which has spent many years carefully gathering information and facts relative to these conditions. The Department of Justice can give to the Committee all the information on the subject that the Committee could gather in months of investigation.

The motion picture industry has its hands full trying to conduct its business despite war-time restrictions, and, at the same time, it is carrying a major portion of the work and responsibility in connection with the different drives in support of the nation's war effort. It should not, therefore, be burdened and handicapped further by investigations that can readily be dispensed with.

The Senate Small Business Committee, on the other hand, has not the facilities, the manpower, or the funds for a thorough investigation. Besides, the investigation is entirely unnecessary, for all the information that the Committee needs is in the hands of the Department of Justice. So, why waste time investigating?

The Committee could spend its time to better advantage if it would digest the information that the Department of Justice could give it. From this information it would soon learn about the existence of monopolistic and other despicable practices. The Committee could then render a real service by merely formulating a proposed plan to eliminate these practices.

But let's not waste any more time or money on investigations.

\* \* \*

THE RULING BY Director of War Mobilization James F. Byrnes calling upon all public places of amusement to observe a midnight curfew beginning Monday, February 26, should have little effect upon the operations of the majority of the country's motion picture theatres. The last show in most theatres ends before midnight, and those that are now running a little later than midnight should not find it too difficult to rearrange their schedules. Certain large metropolitan theatres, where the final show keeps them open until two or three o'clock in the morning, will be affected by the ruling, but they make up a very small part of the nation's theatres.

When one takes into consideration the drastic effect this ruling will have on night-clubs, cabarets, dance-halls, roadside taverns and bars, motion picture exhibitors can indeed consider themselves fortunate. As a matter of fact, it is quite possible that the order will serve to boom attendance in the small-town and subsequent-run neighborhood theatres. In small towns, for example, those who formerly looked to a roadhouse tavern or cabaret for an evening of fun may find the prospect of a midnight curfew hardly worth the

trouble and, instead, may prefer to spend those few hours at a movie. In large cities, many people attend downtown theatres with the idea that, after the show, they will go to some other place of amusement for a few drinks and perhaps some dancing; they, too, may find the midnight curfew a deterrent and, consequently, they may prefer to attend their neighborhood theatres.

While the purpose of the curfew order is primarily to save coal consumed in heating and in providing electricity, it all adds up to a curtailment of the public's entertainment facilities. The order will probably result in a wide-spread change in the amusement habits of many people and, since motion picture theatres will be affected less than the other entertainment facilities, the change may very well be in their favor.

\* \* \*

GRATIFIED AS THIS paper was to learn that the Independent Theatre Owners Association of New York had taken steps to apprise Stanley Adams, head of the War Production Board's Consumers Durable Goods Division, of the great injustice that would be done to the subsequent-run exhibitors by the ruling limiting prints to a maximum of 285, it was even more gratified to learn that National Allied, through Abram F. Myers, its general counsel, had served notice on the WPB that it is preparing a comprehensive statistical report, compiled by its regional units, which will outline in detail the difficulties independent exhibitors will be faced with under a curtailment of prints.

In a statement, Mr. Myers had this to say:

"Actually, the distributors have been gradually reducing the print number over a period of years and this WPB limitation does not pose a new problem to us. It does, however, point up the older problem and threatens to drive it home more sharply. We intend to gather all the facts we need and put them before the WPB rather than simply protest on general grounds. We will stand on the facts we compile."

At the meeting between Max Cohen, representing the ITOA, and Mr. Adams, the latter assured Mr. Cohen that the WPB would see to it that full protection is afforded the subsequent-run theatres. Mr. Adams is credited with saying that "the WPB will not permit, because of the reduction in raw stock quotas, anyone to have an advantage to the disadvantage of anyone else. The distribution of prints must be on a fair and equal basis for all. Any indications to the contrary will bring immediate action for relief by the WPB."

Just what steps would be taken to assure the subsequent-run exhibitors of equitable treatment was not explained by Mr. Adams. Perhaps the statistical record now in preparation by National Allied, which covers situations in different parts of the country, will help Mr. Adams to formulate a definite program that will assure the independent theatres of a square deal.

The first protest to the WPB resulted in an assurance by Mr. Adams that the equities of exhibition would be protected. It is hoped that the presentation of facts and figures will result in an announcement by Mr. Adams of a plan by which these equities can be protected.

### "Pan-Americana" with Phillip Terry and Audrey Long

(RKO, no release date set; time, 85 min.)

An entertaining combination of romantic comedy and music, suitable for either half of a double bill. The story, though thin, is fairly amusing, serving well as a means of introducing the different musical interludes, which are the picture's chief attraction. The music, which is of the Latin-American type, is tuneful, and the production numbers, which feature talented South American entertainers, have a gay, festive quality. Outstanding among the specialties is a sensational "snake" dance by Harold and Lola. Because the production lacks star names, it will require considerable exploitation to attract patrons, but once in, they should be entertained:—

Phillip Terry, an ace cameraman with a reputation as a "girl-chaser," Audrey Long, a feature writer, Eve Arden, managing editor, and Robert Benchley, foreign editor, all members of the editorial staff of a New York pictorial magazine, set out on a tour of Latin-American countries to pick the prettiest girls of each nation for an elaborate musical revue sponsored by the publication. En route, Terry falls in love with Audrey, unaware that she was making the trip chiefly to meet her fiancé, Marc Cramer, an American business man in Rio. Audrey, warned by Eve of Terry's reputation, leads him on. When Terry learns of her fiancé in Rio, he becomes all the more determined to win her and accompanies her to that city, where he meets Cramer and finds him a personable young man. Terry tries many tricks to break up the romance between Audrey and Marc, but they see through his efforts. Cramer, however, sensing that Audrey was being loyal to him in spite of the fact that she loved Terry, graciously bows out of the picture.

Lawrence Kimble wrote the screen play, and John H. Auer produced and directed it. The cast includes Ernest Truex, Isabelita, Rosario and Antonio, Miguelito Valdes, Louise Burnett, Chinita Marin, Chuy Castillon, Padilla Sisters, Chuy Reyes and his Orchestra, Nestor Amaral and his Samba Band and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### "See My Lawyer" with Olsen and Johnson

(Universal, Mar. 9; time, 67 min.)

Suitable for either half of a double bill, this latest of the Olsen and Johnson slapstick comedies has many amusing moments. This time the two comedians have wisely refrained from dominating the proceedings, with the result that the picture is a decided improvement over their last two efforts. The story, of course, is a hodge-podge of nonsense, but one cannot help laughing at their insane doings. A good part of the footage is given over to a series of entertaining specialty acts, which include, among others, Yvette, the "torch" singer; Carmen Amaya, the flamingo dancer; the Four Teens and the King Cole Trio, harmony teams; and the Rogers Adagio Trio, comedy ballroom dancers. In addition, there are a few lively production numbers and singing by Grace McDonald:—

Learning that Olsen and Johnson were seeking a way out of their night-club contract with Franklyn Pangborn, so that they could accept a Hollywood contract, Alan Curtis, Noah Beery, Jr., and Richard Benedict, members of a struggling law firm, try to induce them to use their legal services to break the agreement. The comedians, however, hit upon a better plan. That evening, at the night-club, they start insulting the patrons, causing a number of them to start damage suits against Pangborn, each using the struggling law firm to represent them. Pangborn, frightened by the law suits, sells the club to Olsen and Johnson for \$10,000. The comedians arrange with the lawyers to call off the suits only to find themselves faced with a new suit filed by Edward Brophy, a process server, who claimed \$500,000 damages for assault and battery. The case starts in a courtroom and ends up in the night-club, where the judge, after being victimized by Olsen and Johnson, finds them not guilty on the basis that any one who attends their nightclub is crazy.

Edmund L. Hartmann and Stanley Davis wrote the screen play, based on the Broadway stage play of the same title. Mr. Hartmann produced it and Eddie Cline directed it. The cast includes Lee Patrick, Gus Schilling, William B. Davidson, Stanley Clements, Mary Gordon, The Christianis, Six Willys, the Hudson Wonders and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### "The Picture of Dorian Gray" with George Sanders, Hurd Hatfield and Donna Reed

(MGM, no release date set, time, 110 min.)

Based upon the novel by Oscar Wilde, this drama about a degenerate man who retains his youth while his portrait, reflecting his degeneracy, grows old and ugly, is entertainment strictly for class audiences, but the story unfolds in so incoherent a manner that it is doubtful if even class patrons, unless they read the novel, will know what it is all about. The rank and file will probably find it too difficult to understand, for the story is disconnected and it is never made clear, either through dialogue or action, just what sort of sinful life the man was leading. In one situation, for instance, "Dorian Gray," after committing a murder, blackmails a friend and compels him to dispose of the body. But just what sinister power he had over his friend is left unexplained. Hurd Hatfield, as "Dorian Gray," is a bit too statuesque. George Sanders, as a cynical nobleman, does well with a choice part, but the meaningful dialogue he speaks will probably go over the heads of most people. The action is slowed down considerably by the excessive talk. The story is set at the turn of the century:—

While having his portrait painted by Lowell Gilmore, Hatfield, a wealthy young Londoner, expresses a wish to always remain as young as he looked in the portrait. A few days later, he meets and falls in love with Angela Lansbury, singer in a cheap music hall. Having made up his mind to marry the girl, Hatfield asks Gilmore and Sanders, mutual friends, to meet her. Sanders cynically casts aspersions on the girl's character, and suggests to Hatfield that he put her to a test. The young man tricks Angela into willingly agreeing to spend the night with him. Disillusioned, Hatfield breaks his engagement to Angela, causing her to commit suicide. Sanders, a believer in living only for pleasure, urges Hatfield to dismiss the incident from his mind and influences him to begin living a life of pleasure. Following Sanders' advice, Hatfield soon notices a change in the features of his portrait. With the passing years, Hatfield retains his youthful appearance, but the portrait grows older and uglier with each of his sinful acts. In spite of the fact that his evil ways were a subject of common gossip, Donna Reed, Gilmore's beautiful niece, falls in love with Hatfield. When Gilmore questions him about the rumors of his misdeeds, Hatfield murders him lest he interfere with his romance. His efforts to keep his sinful life from Donna causes Hatfield to commit two more murders. Eventually, Peter Lawford, a suitor for Donna's hand, uncovers evidence proving that Hatfield had murdered her uncle. Panicky, Hatfield puts a knife through the ugly monstrosity that was once his portrait. The painting resumes its original beauty as Hatfield dies, his features changing to that of a horribly disfigured old man.

Albert Lewin wrote the screen play and directed it. Pandro S. Berman produced it. The cast includes Richard Fraser, Miles Mander and others.

Not for children.

### "High Powered" with Robert Lowery and Phyllis Brooks

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 60 min.)

Just a fair program melodrama, which doesn't mean much at the box-office, but serves well enough to round out a double bill for indiscriminating audiences. The story is a trite version of a theme that has been done to death, unfolding in just the manner one expects. The action is fairly steady, and one or two situations provide thrills, but it is just so much old stuff. It has considerable comedy, but much of it is too forced to be effective:—

Robert Lowery, a high-rigger, develops a fear of high places after being in an accident in which a fellow-worker died in a fall from a high scaffold. He becomes an itinerant grape-picker and, while on his way to a job, accepts a lift in a trailer lunch-wagon owned by Phyllis Brooks and Mary Treen, who were headed for a gasoline cracking plant under construction. Through them, he meets Roger Pryor, an old friend and rigger-boss on the job, who persuades him to accept employment as a "chipper" on the ground. Pryor, in an effort to rid Lowery of his phobia, tries to make him go aloft, but Lowery loses his nerve, causing Phyllis to think him a coward. She changes her mind about him, however, when he risks his life to save the life of another worker from an explosion. Both Lowery and Pryor fall in love with



Phyllis and, eventually, have a misunderstanding over her. To add to the ill-feelings, suspicion falls on Lowery when it is claimed that his poor workmanship caused a gas leak that resulted in the explosion. Pryor discovers that a co-worker who hated Lowery was responsible for the leak, but, before he could inform Lowery, the cables on a swinging boom, lifting a 40-ton steel cap to the top of a high tower, snaps. Pryor goes out on the boom to secure the cap, but the loose cable knocks him unconscious, pinning him to the boom. Lowery, despite his phobia, goes aloft and, in a daring rescue, descends to the ground with his unconscious friend. His fear of high places conquered, Lowery wins Phyllis and renews friendship with Pryor.

Milton Raison and Maxwell Shane wrote the screenplay, and William Berke directed it. It is a Pine-Thomas production. The cast includes Joe Sawyer, Ralph Sanford, Ed Gargan, Vince Barnett and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Strange Illusion" with James Lydon, Sally Eilers and Warren William**

(PRC, March 31; time, 86 min.)

A better-than-average psychological mystery melodrama, of program grade. Because of the fact that the lives of decent people are endangered by a gracious but psychopathic criminal, one's interest is held throughout. The work of James Lydon, as a murdered criminologist's son, is outstanding; his determination to unmask the criminal at the risk of his own life, the intelligent way in which he goes about unearthing evidence, and his convincing acting, heighten the suspense. The others in the cast perform competently:—

Dreaming that the death of his father was murder, not accidental, Lydon also visions that Sally Eilers, his mother, and Jayne Hazard, his younger sister, were in danger of being duped by a strange man. Distressed, Lydon cuts short his vacation and returns home. He finds that, during his absence, his mother had become infatuated with Warren William, a charming stranger. The dream preys on Lydon's mind to such an extent that he immediately suspects William of an ulterior motive. Checking William's background through a local banker, Lydon finds him to be a man of means with a good reputation. Lydon, still not satisfied, delves into his father's private files and comes across the case history of a man fitting William's description, but according to the record the man, a psychopathic criminal, was dead. Meanwhile William, who was the man described in the file, and who had murdered Lydon's father to get him off his trail, becomes disturbed by the young man's persistent checking lest it interfere with his plan to marry his mother and gain complete revenge. Aided by Charles Arnt, a psychiatrist and his colleague-in-crime, William, to get Lydon out of the way, invites the boy to take a rest cure at Arnt's sanatorium. Lydon, suspicious of Arnt, readily accepts the invitation so that he could study the man's movements. Arranging with Dr. Regis Toomey, an old family friend, to keep in touch with him daily, Lydon goes to the sanatorium, where he soon becomes convinced that the two men were working together. He eventually uncovers evidence proving that William had murdered his father and, with the aid of Toomey and the police, captures the criminal in time to save his sister from his advances and his mother from a tragic marriage.

Adele Commandini wrote the screen play, Leon Fromkess produced it, and Edgar G. Ulmer directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Salty O'Rourke" with Alan Ladd, Gail Russell and Stanley Clements**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 97 min.)

This racetrack melodrama should go over fairly well with the Alan Ladd fans, for he is cast in one of his typical "tough guy" roles. Somewhat different in story content from most pictures of this type, the action is at times thrilling, at other times laugh-provoking, and for the most part interesting. Were it not for the effective way in which Alan Ladd portrays the hero, he would be an extremely unsympathetic character, for his actions are unpleasant and demoralizing almost to the end. Top acting honors, however, go to young Stanley Clements, who steals the picture with his expert portrayal of a disreputable jockey. Gail Russell, who furnishes the love interest, is the only sympathetic character:—

Given thirty days in which to pay Bruce Cabot, a racketeer, a twenty thousand dollar debt, Alan Ladd, a racetrack

gambler, buys an unmanageable but speedy horse, planning to enter him in a \$50,000 handicap race. Together with William Demarest, his faithful trainer, Ladd contacts Stanley Clements, a rough, brassy, unscrupulous twenty-two-year-old jockey, who had been barred from racing. Clements, an expert rider, handles the horse with ease. Offering Clements one-third of the winning purse, Ladd induces him to pose as his own seventeen-year-old brother in order to obtain a license to ride at the track. Being under-age, Clements finds himself compelled to attend a school for jockeys. Gail Russell, the teacher, expells him on the first day because of his rudeness. Ladd, using all his charm, persuades her to give the boy another chance. Learning that the unruly Clements had fallen in love with Gail, Ladd, to keep him on his best behaviour until after the race, works on Gail's sympathies and induces her to show the lad special attention. Clements, however, mistakenly believes that she was reciprocating his romantic feelings. Meanwhile, Ladd was unaware that Gail had become infatuated with him. On the eve of the big race, Clements proposes to Gail only to learn that she was in love with Ladd. Angered because Ladd had duped him, Clements contacts Cabot and arranges to "throw" the race. Demarest, learning of the deal, informs Gail. She talks to Clements before the race and induces him to change his mind. Cabot, angered when Clements rides Ladd's horse to victory, instructs a henchman to kill the boy. Ladd sets out to avenge his jockey's murder and, through a clever ruse, manages to have Cabot and his henchman kill each other. Indicating a willingness to change his ways, Ladd returns to Gail.

Milton Holmes wrote the screen play, E. D. Leshin produced it, and Raoul Walsh directed it. The cast includes Spring Byington, Marjorie Woodworth, Rex Williams and others.

Unsuitable for children.

### **"God is My Co-Pilot" with Dennis Morgan and Raymond Massey**

(Warner Bros., release date not set; time, 90 min.)

Autobiographical of Colonel Robert Lee Scott's exploits in the U. S. Air Force and as a member of General Chennault's Flying Tigers, this war melodrama, though quite thrilling in spots, offers little that is new for this type of picture. Consequently, its success will probably depend on whether or not your patrons have had their fill of war pictures. The best part of the production, to which extensive footage has been given, is the aerial photography; the air battles are highly exciting. The story has considerable human interest, and it pays a deserving tribute to the Flying Tigers, but some of the situations are so stagey, and the story's treatment is so commonplace that one's interest wanes, except, of course, during the aerial dog fights. Dennis Morgan, as Scott, and Raymond Massey, as Chennault, give a good account of themselves, as does Alan Hale, as a missionary.

Beginning with Scott's boyhood days on a Georgia farm, the story tells of his burning desire to become an airplane pilot. He enlists in the Army and, through a competitive examination, secures an appointment to West Point, eventually being sent to Randolph Field. Graduating from Randolph, Scott marries his hometown sweetheart (Andrea King). After a number of years in which he learns to fly all types of planes in all kinds of weather, Scott, now thirty-four, finds himself stationed in California as an instructor when the Japs attack Pearl Harbor. His ambitions to become a combat pilot are dashed when he is informed that he was too old. Undaunted, he begins a letter-writing campaign to his superiors that ends with his assignment to a B-17 on a secret mission to the Far East. In China, he meets Gen. Chennault and secures his permission to join the Flying Tigers. He learns their methods of combat and soon becomes known as a "one-man air force" as a result of his downing thirteen Jap planes. Leading his squadron on a daring raid on Hong Kong, Scott is shot down. After a few days, Gen. Chennault gives him up for dead just as he is brought back to headquarters by a group of Chinese men and women who had effected his rescue. Fearful of being grounded because of combat fatigue, Scott is delighted when Chennault presents him with a new plane and orders him to lead his squadron on another mission.

Peter Milne wrote the screen play, Robert Buckner produced it, and Robert Florey directed it. The cast includes Dane Clark, John Ridgely, Donald Woods, Murray Alper, Minor Watson, Richard Loo, Philip Ahn and others.



### **"The Body Snatcher" with Boris Karloff and Henry Daniell**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 78 min.)

Skillfully produced and directed, this horror melodrama should more than satisfy those who like their screen entertainment weird and spine-chilling; it is far superior to most pictures of its type. The macabre tale, based on a short story by Robert Louis Stevenson, takes place in Scotland, a century ago, when the medical profession was compelled to deal with grave-robbers in order to obtain bodies for dissection and study. Boris Karloff, as the blackmailing grave-robber, gives one of the best performances of his career, while Henry Daniell is not far behind him as head of the medical school; their ghoulish, maniacal doings keep one on the edge of his seat. Unlike most horror pictures, this one does not resort to the fantastic for its chills and shudders; it makes sense:—

Appointed by Daniell as his assistant, Russell Wade, a medical student, is aghast when he learns that Boris Karloff, a grizzly cab driver, stole bodies from fresh graves and sold them to Daniell. Wade's urge to leave the school is restrained by his desire to help Daniell find a cure for Sharyn Moffett, a crippled child, in whom he had become interested. He soon finds himself involved deeply in the grave-robbings. In need of a corpse to help Daniell study Sharyn's affliction, Wade appeals to Karloff, whom he despised, to get one quickly. Karloff obliges him by murdering a young street singer and bringing her body to the school. Hopelessly involved, Wade helps Daniell dissect the body. Bela Lugosi, dim-witted caretaker at the school, learns of the murder and tries to blackmail Karloff, but the cab driver kills him and brings his body to Wade. Resentful of Daniell's superior position in society, Karloff took delight in belittling him and in threatening him with exposure as an accessory to the different murders. Daniell, plagued by the ruthless cab driver's taunting, finally murders him and dissects his body. Now compelled to do his own grave-robbing, Daniell, while returning to the school on a stormy night with a corpse, mistakes the howling of the wind for Karloff's taunts. Deranged, and believing that the dead body next to him was that of Karloff, he drives his horse and carriage over a cliff.

Philip MacDonald and Carlos Keith wrote the screen play, Val Lewton produced it, and Robert Wise directed it. Jack J. Gross was executive producer. The cast includes Edith Atwater, Rita Corday, Donna Lee and others.

Too horrifying for children.

### **"A Song for Miss Julie" with Shirley Ross and Barton Hepburn**

(Republic, Feb. 19; time, 70 min.)

Poor program entertainment; it is tedious to the extreme. What there is to the story is thin, and the various attempts at comedy fall flat. Moreover, the story is overburdened with dialogue, making the action slow. A few musical numbers, entirely irrelevant to the plot, seem to have been "dragged in by the ears" for no reason other than to add length. One of these numbers features Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin, famed ballet dancers, but it is doubtful if their fame will mean anything at the box-office. Not much can be said for either the direction or the performances.

The story revolves around the efforts of two enterprising playwrights (Roger Clark and Barton Hepburn) to write a play about "Britt Conway," a long-deceased Southern "playboy," about whom there were many scandalous legends. Accompanied by Shirley Ross, Hepburn's wife, a former "strip-teaser," the playwrights visit the mansion of Elisabeth Risdon, a proud, elderly Southern aristocrat and descendant of "Britt," to whom they had paid a large sum of money for her ancestor's life story. Panic-stricken lest the world learn of her ancestor's indiscretions, thus bringing shame on the family name, Miss Risdon instructs Jane Farrar, her daughter, to hide "Britt's" diary. Miss Risdon's efforts to

conceal "Britt's" fabulous adventures irks Shirley and her husband, but Clark, who had fallen in love with Jane, finds the situation idyllic. Learning that Cheryl Walker, who operated a local bistro, was a direct descendant of "Britt," her great grandmother having been his second wife, Shirley visits the young lady and induces her to come to Miss Risdon's home to help stage the annual "Britt Conway Music Festival." Miss Risdon snubs and insults Cheryl, provoking her into giving the playwrights the colorful details of "Britt's" life. Jane, to make amends for her mother's bad behaviour, gives Cheryl "Britt's" diary to authenticate her statements, but pledges Cheryl to secrecy. With this material to work with, the playwrights produce a show that is an immediate success on Broadway. It all ends with every one learning that Jane gave the diary to Cheryl, and with Jane in Clark's arms.

Rowland Leigh wrote the screen play, William Rowland and Carley Harriman produced it, and Mr. Rowland directed it. The cast includes Peter Garey, the Robertos, Vivian Fay and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Unseen" with Gail Russell, Joel McCrea and Herbert Marshall**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 79 min.)

Just a fair murder-mystery melodrama. The producer has resorted to the usual tricks such as an eerie atmosphere, low key photography, and mysterious movements by the different characters to build up one interest and to add suspense to the proceedings, but none of these tricks can hide the fact that the story is incoherent. Murders are committed but the spectator has no idea of the possible motives for the crimes, nor are the different characters given motives for their strange behavior. Even though matters are cleared up at the finish, the spectator is left with a disappointed feeling, for he had not been given an opportunity to guess at the solution himself:—

Employed as governess to Richard Lyon and Nona Griffith, children of Joel McCrea, a widower, Gail Russell learns that, two days before her arrival, an old woman had been murdered mysteriously near the long-vacant house next door. Gail wins Nona's friendship, but Richard, a strange child, resented her. Through Herbert Marshall, the family physician, Gail learns that McCrea's wife had died in a mysterious accident and that he had been suspected of her murder. The killing of the old woman had placed him under suspicion again. McCrea's weird movements puzzle Gail and, to add to her confusion, she learns that Richard was signalling to a mysterious man in the vacant house. Matters become frightening for Gail when Phyllis Brooks, the former governess whom McCrea had discharged, is found murdered shortly after she had gained entrance to the house by a ruse. The following evening, Isobel Elsom, the widowed owner of the vacant house, visits Gail and informs her that the mysterious killer was in her house. After a series of frightening happenings in which Miss Elsom is stabbed to death in the empty house, McCrea traps Marshall as the murderer. He proves that, years previously, Marshall and Miss Elsom had been lovers, and that she had killed her husband to get him out of the way. She had boarded up the house, leaving his body inside. Having recently decided to sell the house, she had asked Marshall to get rid of the body. Marshall had enlisted the aid of Richard so that he could use a secret tunnel leading from McCrea's home to the empty house. He had killed the old woman because he feared that she had seen him enter the house; he had murdered Phyllis because she knew of the crime and had tried to blackmail him; and he had stabbed Miss Elsom because she had spurned his love.

Hagar Wilde and Raymond Chandler wrote the screen play, John Houseman produced it, and Lewis Allen directed it. The cast includes Elisabeth Risdon, Tom Tully, Mikhail Rasumny and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

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Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1945

No. 9

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## A WEAK ANSWER

Replying to the Government's application for temporary relief as it affects clearance, pending the outcome of the trial and the entry of a final decree in the New York anti-trust suit, the five consenting distributors have served notice on the Department of Justice of their intention to defend the industry's present system of clearance when argument on the proposed changes will be heard before Judge Henry Goddard on March 5. In a letter to Robert Wright, U. S. Assistant Attorney General, the attorneys for the distributors had this to say, in part:

"Our fundamental issue is with respect to the granting of injunction relief in dealing with clearance. We believe that on the whole arbitration is the most satisfactory method of solving clearance disputes which in their very nature are complex and depend upon a number of factors involving business judgment. Very often the rights of exhibitors who are not parties to the decree are vitally affected. It was an appreciation of these circumstances which formed the basis for those provisions in the consent decree which made clearance disputes subject to arbitration in the manner provided. . . .

"Substantively we disagree with the position taken in the memorandum regarding arbitration of clearance as provided for by Section VIII. We believe it has been successful from the point of view of all parties concerned, including the public, and that under Section VIII the appeal board has been able to, and has, dealt effectively with the various clearance problems presented to it and we believe that this Section provides adequate relief with respect to clearance disputes. As we have said, the problems are complex and vary according to local situations. By its very nature, clearance cannot be measured with precision but must rest on the business judgment of exhibitor and distributor. The arbitrators by the decree have been permitted to review the business judgment of distributors and exhibitors and to determine whether or not the clearance granted in particular cases was too long in point of time or too extensive in area, after weighing the several factors set forth in Section VIII. We will contend that it is apparent from the decisions that the members of the appeal board and the arbitrators have been assiduous in performing their duties and have provided adequate relief wherever their judgment differed from the business judgment of the distributors and exhibitors which they reviewed.

"We believe that the criticisms in the memorandum with respect to Section VIII are unjustified and that some of the relief requested would work havoc in the industry."

For as long back as I can remember, every time the distributors were faced with reforms they immediately raised the cry that reforms would raise havoc with industry operations. That same cry was raised after the Government's sweeping victory in the Crescent case. Then, the producer

propagandists, in an effort to arouse exhibitor opposition to the Government's efforts in their behalf, claimed that theatre divorcement would affect, not only the large affiliated and unaffiliated circuits, but also the independent exhibitors who had more than one theatre in cities with a population of over 5000. They claimed that the Department of Justice's aim was to compel such exhibitors to dispose of all theatres except one, in order to create competition.

This claim was effectively dispelled by National Allied, which, realizing that some exhibitors might be influenced unduly by the propagandists, pointed out that "there is no power anywhere to dissolve, or to compel an exhibitor to dispose of theatres, except for violation of the Sherman Act. It is no violation of that act for an exhibitor to have more than one theatre, or even all the theatres, in a town of any size. . . . If you have not violated the law, nothing can harm you."

Now, in counteracting the Government's proposals for the elimination of clearance between theatres charging the same admission prices, the consenting distributors are again raising the cry that such a reform would create havoc within the industry. What they mean, of course, without saying it in so many words, is that the reform sought would have a devastating effect on the elaborate and carefully planned clearance system that they have built up over the years for the protection of their affiliated theatres, at the expense of the independent theatres.

As to the distributors' contention that the "members of the appeal board and the arbitrators have been assiduous in the performance of their duties," no one, not even the Government, has claimed otherwise. But the fact remains that, under the present provisions of the Decree, the arbitrators have been and still are hamstrung by the maze of restrictions limiting their power to arbitrate specific runs. It is these restrictions that the distributors seek to retain and which the Government seeks to eliminate.

If, as the distributors claim, the problems of clearance are in their very nature complex, and depend upon a number of factors involving business judgment, then, certainly the arbitrators, who are called upon to solve these problems, should be given a reasonable amount of latitude, so long as they remain within the bounds of a few fundamental principles. And that is exactly what the Government is asking for.

As it has already been said in these columns, it is usually most difficult to obtain from a court temporary relief pending the outcome of a suit, particularly in this case where the relief sought is so extraordinary. The Government, however, has built up such a strong case for the elimination of clearance that, though the relief may not be granted in an interim decree, it may very well be granted in a final decree at the conclusion of the suit.

**OUR BIGGEST JOB THIS YEAR! — RED CROSS DRIVE — MARCH 15-21**

**"Hotel Berlin" with Raymond Massey,  
Faye Emerson, Andrea King  
and Helmut Dantine**

(Warner Bros., March 17; time, 98 min.)

This anti-Nazi melodrama is absorbing without being exceptional, yet it should do pretty good business because of the timely title and of the fact that the story is based on the widely-read novel by Vicki Baum. All the action takes place in a large Berlin hotel, one that has felt the devastating Allied air assaults, and the main story revolves around the efforts of a discharged German soldier, a known anti-Nazi, to escape from the building, where he had been trapped by the Gestapo. The action is quite exciting at times, holding one in considerable suspense. Several by-plots have been worked into the main plot in a plausible way. One of these revolves around Raymond Massey, as a Nazi General of the old school, who, caught in a plot against Hitler's life, is compelled by the Gestapo to take his own life after they balk his every attempt to escape. Another by-plot revolves around the regeneration of Faye Emerson, a woman of loose morals, who was permitted to ply her trade in the hotel in exchange for information she furnished to the Gestapo.

In the development of the main story, Helmut Dantine, the discharged soldier, whose political leaning had been found out, is traced by the Gestapo to the hotel, where a few of the employees, members of the underground, had kept him hidden. In his efforts to escape from the building, Dantine, posing as a waiter, meets Andrea King, an actress, with whom Massey was deeply in love. Andrea, learning of Massey's impending doom and discovering Dantine's identity, becomes friendly with the anti-Nazi in the hope that he will help her out of the country. Through a tip furnished by Faye Emerson, George Coulouris, a Gestapo official, learns of Dantine's presence in Andrea's suite. When he investigates, Dantine beats him to death and, with Andrea's aid, escapes from the hotel in the uniform of an officer. Dantine, believing in Andrea, seeks a way to get her out of the country, but his co-workers warn him against her. When they prove to him that she pretended to be anti-Nazi in order to trap the underground leaders, Dantine arranges for Andrea to be brought to him. He kills her.

Steve Geray, as the hotel manager, provides a few bright comedy moments, but for the most part the action is somber. Others taking part in the action include Peter Lorre, as a drunken scientist; Alan Hale, as a Gestapo officer, who complains bitterly when the party compels him to loan it his ill-gotten gains; Peter Whitney, as an arrogant young officer seeking gayety during his twenty-four hours leave; and Henry Daniell, as a party leader who accepts the pending German defeat and lays plans in preparation for a future war—each plays his part well, giving one an effective idea of what must be the Berlin of today.

Jo Pagano and Alvah Bessie wrote the screen play, Louis Edelman produced it, and Peter Godfrey directed it. The cast includes Dickie Tyler, Frank Reicher, Helene Thimig, Kurt Kreuger and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"The Spell of Amy Nugent"  
with Derek Farr and Vera Lindsay**

(PRC, Feb. 10; time, 60 min.)

Produced on a modest budget, this British-made drama is a minor program entertainment, the sort that will probably have little appeal for American audiences. The story, which deals with spiritualism, is somewhat confusing. Moreover, the acting is decidedly amateurish and, in addition, some of the dialogue is too difficult to understand because of the thick English accents. Through the different characters, the picture expounds some views on spiritualism, but they are the sort that will be better understood by intellectuals rather than by the rank and file:—

Derek Farr, only son of Winifred Davis, an upper class Englishwoman, falls in love with Diana King, daughter of

a village grocer. Miss Davis, who cherished the hope that her son would one day marry Vera Lindsay, a friend of the family since childhood, quarrels with Farr over his proposed marriage to the village girl. Farr, peeved, determines to marry the girl at once, but he learns to his horror that the girl had suddenly died from heart failure. Her unexpected death affects him to such a degree that he turns to spiritualism in the hope that he would be brought in contact with her. Thereafter, the dominating personality of Frederick Leister, a notorious medium, fastens itself upon him. Felix Aylmer, Farr's tutor, becomes disturbed lest Leister's domination have an adverse effect on the young man's mind. He appeals to Hay Petrie, a disinterested theologian, who knew of Leister's evil genius, to dissuade Farr from attending more of the seances conducted by the medium. Petrie's efforts to influence the young man fail. At one of the seances, Leister has the form of Farr's dead fiancée materialize. Farr becomes so shocked by the sight that it affects his mind. He becomes surly and dangerous. But Vera, inspired by her love for him, prays for guidance and succeeds in restoring him to normalcy and to the realization of his love for her.

Miles Malleston wrote the screen play, R. Murray-Leslie produced it, and John Harlow directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Delightfully Dangerous" with Jane Powell,  
Ralph Bellamy and Constance Moore**

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 93 min.)

This offers some melodious music played by Morton Gould and his Orchestra, and several elaborate production numbers, but they are not strong enough to lift the picture above the level of moderately entertaining program fare. The commonplace story, which is developed in a routine manner, and the faulty direction, do not help matters. Jane Powell is an appealing adolescent, with an exceptionally fine voice, and she can act, too, but material such as this does not take full advantage of her talents. The picture has some amusing bits here and there, the best being Jane's efforts to appear grown-up. Its ninety-three minutes running time is unwarranted:—

Fifteen-year-old Jane Powell, student in a music and art school, is delighted when she receives word that her sister, Constance Moore, whom she believed to be a musical comedy star, would attend the school pageant in which she (Jane) had a leading role. After the pageant, Ralph Bellamy, a visiting Broadway producer, congratulates Jane on her singing and invites her to visit him in New York whenever she had the opportunity. Jane decides to visit the big city a few days later and, while trying to locate Constance, discovers that she was really a burlesque queen. Mortified, she rushes to Bellamy's apartment. The producer consoles her, and arranges for Constance to take her home. On the following day, Constance, busy at a matinee performance, asks Bellamy to put Jane on the train returning to school. Jane, however, hatches a plot to save Constance from continuing her burlesque career. Knowing that Bellamy was seeking a star for his forthcoming show, she dresses as a grown-up in the hope that he will give her the part, thus enabling her to support Constance. Bellamy, amused, takes her to a benefit-musical, where Morton Gould, overhearing her humming, invites her to sing with his orchestra. She is given a big ovation, and Gould tries to sign her for his radio program, but, when his sponsor learns that her sister was a burlesque queen, he calls off the deal. While preparing to return to school, Jane overhears Constance singing a Strauss waltz in "jive" tempo. This gives her another idea. She tricks Constance into making a recording of the song, and then takes the record to Bellamy. Impressed, Bellamy gives Constance the leading part in his show, featuring both Jane and herself in an elaborate "swing" version of the Strauss waltz.

Walter DeLeon and Arthur Phillips wrote the screen play, Charles R. Rogers produced it, and Arthur Lubin directed it. The cast includes Arthur Treacher, Louise Beavers, Ruth Tobey and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



### **"She's a Sweetheart" with Jane Darwell, Jane Frazee and Larry Parks**

(Columbia, December 7; time, 69 min.)

A rather talkative but pleasant enough program drama, produced on a skimpy budget. There's not much to the story, which revolves around a motherly woman who operates a canteen for servicemen and, through her kind understanding, helps them to adjust their personal problems, particularly their romances; but, since it is acted engagingly by the players, it keeps one moderately entertained. A few songs, pleasingly sung by Jane Frazee, have been interpolated without retarding the action; and the romantic angles are charming:—

Jane Darwell, motherly head of a canteen for servicemen, takes a personal interest in Larry Parks, an orphan, because of his congenial manner. Miss Darwell becomes concerned when Parks falls in love with Jane Frazee, an entertainer at the canteen; she felt that Jane's only interest in entertaining the servicemen was the personal publicity she would get out of it. Expecting to be shipped overseas any day, Parks informs his 'buddy, Jimmy Lord, that he planned to marry Jane before leaving. The two friends come to blows when Lord cautions Parks against Jane and proves that all the servicemen in the canteen had an autographed picture of her. Unaware that Jane's publicity agent had handed out the photographs without her knowledge, Parks, disillusioned, ships overseas without saying good-bye to her. Some months later, Miss Darwell receives a telegram from the War Department informing her that Parks was "missing in action." Jane learning of the news, is heartbroken. She devotes most of her time to the canteen, self-effacingly performing the less tasteful chores—scrubbing floors and dish washing. Miss Darwell and Lord soon realize that they had misjudged her, and decide that she was really in love with Parks. At a surprise party honoring Miss Darwell for her efforts in keeping up the servicemen's morale, Parks makes an unexpected appearance; for some unexplained reason, a telegram notifying Miss Darwell that he had been found safe had never been delivered. He refuses to see Jane, but when Miss Darwell and Lord admit to him that they had misjudged her, he rushes to embrace her.

Muriel Roy Bolton wrote the screen play, Ted Richmond produced it, and Del Lord directed it. The cast includes Nina Foch, Ross Hunter, Dave Willock and others.

### **"There Goes Kelly" with Jackie Moran and Wanda McKay**

(Monogram, Feb. 16; time, 61 min.)

Combining murder-mystery and comedy, this is just a program melodrama of minor importance, suitable for theatres that cater to audiences who are not too exacting in their demands. The story is a loosely written affair and, since most everything that happens is handled in a comedy vein, one cannot take the murder-mystery angle seriously. The comedy is amusing on occasion, and slightly tiresome at other times. A few songs, sung pleasantly by Wanda McKay, have been worked into the plot:—

Misrepresenting himself as an official of the broadcasting station where he worked as a page boy, Jackie Moran arranges an audition for Wanda McKay, the station's newly-hired receptionist. Sidney Miller, another page boy and Moran's pal, tries to stop him, but Moran insists upon going through with the audition. Moran discovers that Wanda has a good singing voice, but he gets into trouble with Anthony Warde the station's manager, for the unauthorized audition. A few days later, Jan Wiley, that station's singing star, is murdered mysteriously during a rehearsal. Detective Ralph Sanford takes charge of the case and he soon establishes that most every one who was present in the room had a motive for committing the murder, particularly John Gilbreath, a cowboy singer, who fled from the room. Moran and Miller

find the murder gun and learn that it belonged to the cowboy. But he, too, is murdered before Sanford can question him. Moran and Miller visit the dead cowboy's apartment and discover evidence that Jan had once been involved with him in a shooting scrape. Sanford, using the information he had gathered with Moran's aid, confronts all the suspects in the studio and tricks Edward Emerson, the studio's announcer, into confessing the crimes. Sanford proves that Emerson had been in love with Jan and that he had been victimized by her and the cowboy. Meanwhile Warde had signed Wanda as the station's new singing star, and her radio debut turns out to be a huge success.

Edmond Kelso wrote the screen play, William Strobach produced it, and Phil Karlstein directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Youth on Trial" with Cora Sue Collins and David Reed**

(Columbia, January 11; time, 60 min.)

Like most of the juvenile delinquency pictures that have thus far been produced, this one, too, resorts to preachment to put over its message about the need of parental guidance. It is no better or worse than its predecessors and should serve its purpose as a supporting feature wherever this type of entertainment is acceptable. As usual, the action revolves around the sordid doings of a reckless youth and his influence upon a good but weak-willed 'teen-aged girl. Daring escapes from the police, gambling, selling liquor to minors, gun fights, and even the murder of one's own father are depicted in an effort to show how bad the juvenile crime problem is, but it is all so grossly exaggerated that it loses its dramatic force:—

Alarmed by the rise in juvenile delinquency, Mary Currier, a Juvenile Court judge, arranges for a raid on a roadhouse, known to be a "hangout" for reckless youths. That night, Miss Currier's 'teen-aged daughter, Cora Sue Collins, goes on a secret date with David Reed, a villainous high school student, much to the disappointment of Eric Sinclair, a model young man, who loved her. The young couple settle down for some serious drinking at the roadhouse just as the raiding party arrives. They manage to escape unrecognized, but a number of their friends are caught. On the following day, when the youngsters appear before Miss Currier, one of them reveals that Reed and Cora had escaped during the raid. Shocked, Miss Currier nevertheless issues warrants for both Reed and her daughter. Reed attempts to bully the others into falsely testifying that he and Cora were not at the roadhouse, but he manages only to get Cora and himself ostracized by the entire school. Unable to stand this subtle punishment, Reed decides to leave town, and Cora agrees to accompany him. Needing money, Reed tries to steal some from his father, a wealthy gambler. His father catches him in the act and, in the ensuing struggle, Reed accidentally shoots and kills him. Later, in a tourist cabin, Cora first learns of Reed's murderous deed. She manages to notify the police of their whereabouts without Reed's knowledge. When the police close in on the cabin, Reed shoots at them. Cora runs from the cabin only to be shot down by Reed. The police wound the young man, and both he and Cora are taken to a hospital. Reed dies, but Cora recuperates and is reunited with Eric. The City Council, now aware of the need to curb juvenile delinquency, appropriate a huge sum of money in order to help Miss Currier combat the evil.

Michel Jacoby wrote the screen play, Ted Richmond produced it, and Oscar Boetticher, Jr., directed it. The cast includes Georgia Baycs, Robert Williams, Joseph Crehan, John Calvert and others.

Too sordid for children.

Through a typographical error, the running time of "The Body Snatcher," reviewed last week, was given as 8 minutes. The correct time is 78 minutes.

**"It's a Pleasure"**  
**with Sonja Henie and Michael O'Shea**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

Fourth of the International pictures released through RKO, "It's a Pleasure" stacks up as fairly good entertainment, despite a story and treatment that is routine. The most entertaining feature of the picture is, of course, Sonja Henie's dazzling antics on ice; the grace and ease with which she so skillfully executes her skating routines are fascinating to watch. Not the least of the picture's other assets are the elaborate, tastefully designed settings and the very good Technicolor photography. As said, the story is routine, nevertheless, it has enough romance, comedy, music and drama to put it over with most audiences. The performances are engaging:—

When Michael O'Shea, an excitable but likeable hockey player is barred from professional hockey for striking a referee, Sonja Henie, member of a skating troupe entertaining between periods, secures a job for him with a small ice show operated by Bill Johnson. Marie McDonald, Johnson's attractive but idle wife, deliberately flirts with O'Shea and makes some headway with him, but the hockey player falls in love with Sonja and marries her. Under Sonja's careful guidance, O'Shea gives up drinking, his major trouble, and soon becomes the show's star performer. Arthur Loft, a big-time promoter scouting for new talent, plans to sign O'Shea to a contract and arranges to watch him skate at one of the performances. But Marie, in order to keep O'Shea with her husband's show, deliberately gets him intoxicated, causing him to miss the performance. Sonja substitutes for him. Impressed with her brilliant skating, Loft offers her a contract. She declines when he refuses to include O'Shea. When O'Shea learns of this, he decides to leave Sonja lest he interfere with her career. Marie, confessing her infidelity to her husband, tries to accompany O'Shea, but he refuses to have anything to do with her. Concluding that O'Shea and Marie had run off together, Sonja dismisses him from her mind and accepts Loft's offer. She soon becomes a great star. Meanwhile O'Shea rehabilitates himself by becoming interested in underprivileged boys and, through the efforts of Johnson, who convinces Sonja of the true reasons for O'Shea's leaving her, is ultimately reunited with his famous wife.

Lynn Starling and Elliott Paul wrote the screen play, David Lewis produced it, and William A. Seiter directed it. The cast includes Gus Schilling, Iris Adrian, Cheryl Walker, Don Loper and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Docks of New York"**  
**with the East Side Kids**

(Monogram, no release date set; time, 62 min.)

Typical in story development and treatment to the previous "East Side Kids" pictures, "Docks of New York," though it leaves much to be desired, should get by as program entertainment for the followers of the series. Others may find it wearisome. The fault lies in the story; it is far-fetched and infantile. Another fault is that none of the players seems convincing. Leo Gorcey, as usual, makes the best impression; his "tough guy" antics and his misuse of the English language provokes a number of hearty laughs:—

Finding a diamond necklace in an alley, Huntz Hall, one of the Kids, takes it to Leo Gorcey, leader of the gang. The boys investigate and find Cy Kendall, a murderous-looking foreigner, searching for the gems. Kendall chases them, but they manage to elude him. Later, Gorcey learns that the jewels belonged to Betty Blythe and her niece, Gloria Pope, European refugees, who, fearing for their lives, were hiding from Kendall. Without revealing that her niece was the

royal princess of a mythical kingdom, Miss Blythe gives the necklace to Gorcey for safekeeping. Meanwhile Kendall and George Meeker, Gloria's royal cousin, lay plans to obtain the necklace and to seize the kingdom's throne. In need of funds, Gloria pawns a paste imitation of the necklace. Kendall, believing it to be the real necklace, murders the pawnbroker and steals it. The Kids discover the murder only to find themselves charged with the crime. Kendall, however, shrewdly manages to obtain their release and, through a trick, obtains the real necklace from Gorcey by switching it with the paste imitation. When the police learn that Carlyle Blackwell, Jr., a friend of the Kids, had bought an engagement ring for Gloria at the pawnshop, they arrest him for the murder. Meanwhile Gorcey discovers that Kendall had switched necklaces with him. He and the Kids set out on Kendall's trail and, after a series of incidents, in which they rescue Gloria from being murdered by Meeker, they trap the criminals and clear Blackwell of the murder charge. Gloria, revealing her royal status, marries Blackwell.

Harvey Gates wrote the screen play, Sam Katzman and Jack Dietz produced it, and Wallace Fox directed it. The cast includes Pierre Watkin and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"The Crime Doctor's Courage"**  
**with Warner Baxter and Hillary Brooke**

(Columbia, Feb. 27; time, 70 min.)

This program murder-mystery melodrama should prove satisfactory to the followers of the series, for, in spite of the fact that the story offers little that is new, the complexities of the plot are worked out well enough to hold one's interest until the end, where the identity of the murderer is revealed. In a few situations, the spectator is held in tense suspense. The plot is developed along the same lines as the previous "Crime Doctor" pictures—that is, by having Warner Baxter conduct the investigation of the murder without the sanction of the police:—

Fearful that her husband (Stephen Crane), whose two previous wives met violent death, was going insane, Hillary Brooke invites Warner Baxter, a famed psychoanalyst, to a dinner party to study the man. At the dinner, Baxter meets Jerome Cowan, a mystery-story writer; Lloyd Corrigan, Hillary's eccentric father; Robert Scott, a family friend; and Anthony Caruso and Lupita Tovar, a Spanish dance team. During dinner, one of the servants reveals himself as the brother of Crane's first wife and accuses him of murdering her. Crane is later found dead in his study, an apparent suicide. Baxter, however, deduces that he had been murdered. Suspicion falls on the servant, because of his threats to Crane, and on Hillary, because she alone was to inherit Crane's huge fortune. Scott, who had long been secretly in love with Hillary, asks her to marry him, but she declines his attentions. Later, when Scott learns that she was in love with Caruso, the dancer, he reveals to Baxter that the dancing team had never been seen during daylight and intimates that they were vampires. Baxter investigates and unearths evidence that lends credence to Scott's claim. Additional clues, however, reveal to him that the vampirism angle was nothing more than a publicity stunt thought up by Cowan. Subsequent events put Baxter on the killer's trail, which leads him to the dance team's home. There, he finds Cowan wounded and Scott about to drive wooden stakes into the hearts of the sleeping dancers. He captures Scott after a struggle and proves that he had murdered Crane because he wanted Hillary for himself, and that he had tried to kill the others because they stood in his way.

Eric Taylor wrote the screen play, Rudolph C. Flotow produced it, and George Sherman directed it. The cast includes Emory Parnell, Charles Arnt and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



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New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 1945

No. 10

### A REPORT ON THE NEW YORK ANTI-TRUST SUIT

October 8 has been set as the trial date for the Government's anti-trust suit against the eight major film companies. The date was set at the hearing on March 5 before Judge Henry W. Goddard in the Federal District Court in New York City.

While the date set for the trial is later than was hoped for in independent circles, the general feeling is one of satisfaction because the date is now definite.

A pre-trial conference has been set for March 26 in Judge Goddard's chambers to determine the approximate length of time the trial will require, and to decide which issues may be agreed upon prior to the trial. Robert L. Wright, special assistant to the attorney general, who represented the Government at the hearing, estimated that the trial might take from one to two years.

Judge Goddard, after hearing argument on the Government's application for a temporary injunction relating to unreasonable clearance, which the attorneys for the distributors opposed bitterly, withheld his decision pending the filing of briefs by both sides.

Morris L. Ernst, representing the Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers, argued in favor of the Government's application for a temporary injunction against unreasonable clearance, stating that his clients would be affected vitally by the court's decision. Judge Goddard allowed him ten days in which to prepare and file a brief.

An application was made by the Conference of Independent Exhibitors, represented by Abram F. Myers and Jesse L. Stern, for permission to file a brief a *amicus curia* (friend of the court). John W. Davis, attorney for Loew's, former Judge Joseph Proskauer, attorney for Warner Brothers, and John Caskey, attorney for Twentieth Century-Fox, objected strongly to this application. Notwithstanding, Judge Goddard granted the application and accepted the brief.

Abram F. Myers, in a special bulletin issued March 6, informed the members of the Independent Conference that, in addition to setting a definite trial date, two other main objectives were attained at the hearing. First, the two briefs—the Government's and the Independent Conference's—gave Judge Goddard a picture of the case he had not had before, thus tending to bring him to a realization of the seriousness of the case, and secondly, the definite trial date brings Columbia, Universal and United Artists back into the case as defendants.

The independent exhibitor associations comprising the Conference of Independent Exhibitors, which have specifically authorized the submission to the

Court of the brief and the inclusion of their names as friends of the Court are as follows:

Independent Exhibitors, Inc., of New England, covering Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont; Allied Theatres of Connecticut, Inc.; Allied Theatre Owners of New Jersey, Inc.; Allied Independent Theatre Owners of Eastern Pennsylvania, Inc.; Motion Picture Theatre Owners of Maryland, Inc.; Allied Motion Picture Theatre Owners of Western Pennsylvania, Inc.; Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio; Allied Theatres of Michigan, Inc.; Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana, Inc.; Allied Theatres of Illinois, Inc.; Independent Theatre Owners Protective Association of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan; Allied Theatre Owners of Texas, Inc.; Independent Theatre Owners of Southern California and Arizona; Independent Theatre Owners of Northern California and Nevada; Independent Theatre Owners of Washington, Northern Idaho and Alaska; Independent Theatre Owners of Oregon; Allied-Independent Theatre Owners of Iowa-Nebraska; North Central Allied Independent Theatres, Inc.; and Unaffiliated Independent Exhibitors of New York City.

### EXHIBITORS CLAIM THEIR RIGHTS IN RAW FILM STOCK

Following up its notification to the War Production Board of its intention to compile a comprehensive statistical report outlining the difficulties that independent exhibitors will face as a result of the order curtailing the number of prints, Allied States Association, through Abram F. Myers, its general counsel, submitted to Stanley Adams, head of the WPB's Consumer Durable Goods Division, original letters from independent exhibitor organizations and from independent exhibitors, located in different parts of the country, in which they outline the hardships that a further reduction in the already limited supply of prints will place upon them in their particular territories.

In his letter transmitting the information from different sections of the country, Mr. Myers informed Mr. Adams that other independent exhibitor organizations on the West Coast are preparing reports concerning conditions in their respective territories. "We have suggested the writing of these letters," states Mr. Myers, "in the belief that you, in handling a matter which so vitally affects the theatres, will want to have first-hand information from the exhibitors themselves. The print shortage and the actions of the distributors in taking advantage of it are not confined

(Continued on last page)

**"Molly and Me" with Gracie Fields,  
Monty Woolley and Roddy McDowall**  
(20th Century-Fox, April; time, 76 min.)

A very entertaining comedy drama, the sort that should go over with all types of audiences. The story, which deals with the humanization of an embittered old man by an unemployed vaudeville performer, who becomes his housekeeper, is an appealing combination of human interest and comedy; it keeps one chuckling consistently and holds one's interest throughout. The direction and the performances are skillful. Gracie Fields, as the cheerful housekeeper, wins one's sympathy by her kindness and understanding. The manner in which she outwits and discharges the household's crooked servants, and the means she employs to prevent her employer's unfaithful wife from duping him, should prove highly amusing. Monty Woolley, as the irascible old man, has a part that fits him like a glove; his caustic quips are extremely laugh-provoking. Roddy McDowall, as Woolley's lonely young son, is deeply appealing:—

In need of funds, Gracie, an unemployed actress, tricks Reginald Gardiner, Woolley's butler and a former actor himself, into hiring her as Woolley's housekeeper. Gracie learns that Woolley, a bad tempered old fellow, had lived in seclusion ever since his wife had run off with another man fifteen years previously, disrupting his political career. Gracie's presence puts new life into the household, and Woolley, his spirits raised, decides to resume his political career. Shortly after Woolley leaves on a business trip, Gracie, discovering that the servants were dishonest, discharges them. Meanwhile Roddy McDowall, Woolley's young son returns from boarding school, and he and Gracie become fast friends. She learns that the boy was uncomfortable in his father's presence, and that he believed his mother was dead. Complications arise when Gracie, short of household help, receives word from Woolley to prepare a large dinner for some important guests. She enlists the aid of a theatrical troupe, her friends, to act as servants. The dinner is a huge success, but later, Woolley discharges Gracie and her friends when he finds them and Roddy harmlessly mimicking his guests during a kitchen celebration. Gracie, enraged by Woolley's insulting remarks, denounces him for his treatment of Roddy. Her words have a decided effect on the old man, causing him to become reconciled with the boy. Shortly after Woolley asks Gracie and her friends to stay on, his estranged wife returns to blackmail him. Gracie, aided by the theatrical troupe, stages a fake murder involving the woman, causing her to flee the country. It all ends with a romance between Gracie and Woolley in the offing.

Leonard Praskins wrote the screen play from a novel by Frances Marion. Robert Bassler produced it, and Lewis Seiler directed it. The cast includes Natalie Schafer, Edith Barrett, Queenie Leonard and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Fashion Model" with Marjorie Weaver  
and Robert Lowery**  
(Monogram, March 2; time, 61 min.)

An undistinguished program melodrama. Combining murder mystery and comedy, it is not outstanding in either; the comedy is silly and forced, and the melodramatic angle follows a time-worn pattern. About the best thing that can be said for it is that

the action moves along at a fast pace, and that the performances are adequate considering the weak material the players had to work with. Undiscriminating audiences may find it amusing in spots:—

Marjorie Weaver and Robert Lowery, model and stock boy, respectively, of a fashionable dress shop, become involved in a murder when the body of Lorna Gray, another model, is found in the shop's stock room. Detective Tim Ryan arrests Lowery on suspicion of murder, but Marjorie talks him into releasing the young man. John Valentine, wealthy admirer of the dead model, offers a reward to Edward Keane and Dorothy Christy, operators of the shop, in return for a valuable brooch, which he claimed he had given to Lorna. Shortly after, Keane is found murdered under circumstances that again point the finger of suspicion on Lowery. The young man is arrested, but Marjorie, learning of the search for the valuable brooch, engineers his escape so that they could carry on an investigation of their own, thus clearing themselves. Through the murder of a second model, who had the brooch in her possession, Marjorie and Lowery find a clue that leads them to the home of Harry Depp and his wife, Nell Craig, wealthy customers of the shop. Depp, a mild-mannered man, confesses the murders to Marjorie and informs her that he had been blackmailed by Lorna, with whom he had been carrying on a secret love affair, and that the others stood in his way when he tried to regain the brooch, which belonged to his wife. Having confessed, Depp prepares to murder Marjorie, but she is saved by the timely arrival of Lowery and the police.

Tim Ryan and Victor Hammond wrote the screen play, William Strohbach produced it, and William Bedaine directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Rough, Tough and Ready"**  
**with Chester Morris and Victor McLaglen**  
(Columbia, March 22; time, 66½ min.)

A moderately entertaining program melodrama, suitable mostly for small-town and neighborhood theatres as the lower-half of a double bill. Handicapped by a trite story and by too much comedy, the picture may prove a disappointment to those who may expect, from the title, a really exciting melodrama. So much stress has been placed on the comedy, which at times is quite dull, that it has weakened the story dramatically. The plot is made up of familiar ingredients, and it unfolds in just the manner one expects. Victor McLaglen and Chester Morris, as buddies in work but rivals in romantic mix-ups, are a none too successful imitation of the "Flagg-Quirt" combination. The action affords thrills on several occasions, and there is a rousing fist fight between the two rivals:—

With the attack on Pearl Harbor, Morris, co-partner in a salvage company with Jean Rogers, who had inherited her share of the business, offers his salvage equipment and crew to the Government. The Army accepts the offer, and Morris and his men are sent to a training camp to study new diving methods. Unaware that Jean was madly in love with him, Morris took a delight in stealing girl-friends away from Victor McLaglen, his friend and co-worker. While Morris is away, McLaglen falls in love with Veda Ann Borg, a "gold-digger," planning to marry her. Morris, returning from camp, learns of McLaglen's impending marriage and kiddingly informs



him that he intends to steal his future bride. Later, through a series of coincidents, Morris goes out on a date with Veda, completely unaware that she was the girl McLaglen intended to marry, Veda fall in love with him and jilts McLaglen. Morris, learning what had happened, tries to explain to his friend that he did not love Veda and that he had no idea that she was his girl. McLaglen, however, accuses him of deliberately breaking up the romance and starts a fight. Both men are ordered overseas before the breach can be healed. While trying to clear a sunken ship from the port of a South Pacific island, Japanese planes attack the salvage ship and the concussion of their bombs pin McLaglen to the wreckage. Morris, risking his own life, dons a diving suit and rescues his friend. Their friendship resumed, both men return to the United States where Morris comes to the realization of his love for Jean.

Edward T. Lowe wrote the screen play, Alexis Thurn-Taxis produced it, and Del Lord directed it. The cast includes Amelita Ward, Addison Richards and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Earl Carroll Vanities"**  
with Dennis O'Keefe and Constance Moore  
(Republic, no release date set; time, 91 min.)

Just a fair romantic comedy with music. The story is somewhat amusing in spots, but since it hasn't much substance, and since most of the comedy is ineffective, it tends to tire one. Moreover, the plot developments are confusing. Unlike the title indicates, the story has little to do with either the career of Earl Carroll or his glamorous musical revues. Consequently, the picture will prove disappointing to those expecting to see a lavish type musical. The music, which is of the popular variety, and the fact that it is played by Woody Herman and his orchestra, should be of considerable help in selling the picture to the younger crowd. Constance Moore, as the heroine, is the mainstay of the picture; her singing is pleasant and she acts well. As a matter of fact, whatever entertainment value the picture has is due more to the efforts of the players than to the material. Otto Kruger, as Carroll, plays a minor role:—

Visiting the United States to help float a loan for her country, Constance Moore, American-educated princess of a mythical Balkan kingdom, attends a night club operated by Eve Arden, her close friend. When Stephanie Bachelor, the club's singer fails to appear because of an accident, Eve suggests that Constance take her place, incognito, of course. Meanwhile Dennis O'Keefe, a young playwright, had arranged for Earl Carroll (Otto Kruger) to watch Stephanie perform. Constance's singing pleases Carroll, and he offers to back O'Keefe's show providing Constance is starred. Completely unaware of Constance's identity, O'Keefe induces her to accept the lead. Constance, amused, accepts his offer, intending to stay in the show only until Stephanie recovers. O'Keefe bears down on her during rehearsals, causing many quarrels between them. Stephanie, realizing Constance and O'Keefe were falling in love despite their arguments, becomes jealous. She investigates Constance and, learning of her royal status, informs O'Keefe that she was merely playing him for a fool. Stephanie next visits Constance's mother, the Queen, and informs her of her daughter's Broadway activi-

ties. The Queen orders Constance to leave the show lest her activities cause the international bankers to refuse the loan. Constance agrees, but, as a final gesture, she secretly decides to appear on opening night. Learning of her decision, friends of O'Keefe arrange for the Queen and the international bankers to attend the performance. The show is an overwhelming hit, the bankers float the loan, and the Queen, pleased, approves Constance's engagement to O'Keefe.

Frank Gill, Jr., wrote the screen play, Albert J. Cohen produced it, and Joseph Santley directed it. The cast includes Alan Mowbray, Pinky Lee, Parkyakarkus, Leon Belasco, Beverly Loyd and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Sudan" with Maria Montez, Jon Hall  
and Turhan Bey**

(Universal, March 2; time, 76 min.)

This latest in Universal's series of romantic adventure melodramas, photographed in Technicolor and featuring the same principal players, has all the action, excitement, romance and lavish settings of the previous pictures, but as entertainment it will appeal chiefly to the younger element and to the ardent adult action fans. As in the other pictures, the story has a fairy-like quality, this time revolving around the exotic Queen of a mythical Egyptian kingdom. The plot, which centers around the Queen's efforts to avenge her father's murder, has the usual ramifications, such as her falling in love with a commoner, who in turn helps her to regain her throne, which had been seized by a scheming nobleman. It has all the ingredients the action fans like—fast riding, hairbreadth escapes, and exciting encounters between the villain's warriors and the hero's daring band of men:—

The mysterious assassination of the King of Khemmis brings Maria Montez, his spirited daughter, to the throne. George Zucco, the scheming royal chamberlain, who had committed the murder, convinces Maria that Turhan Bey, leader of a band of escaped slaves, was responsible for the crime. Maria, bent on revenge, disguises herself and sets out to find Bey and to lure him into a trap. Meanwhile Zucco arranges with a slave trader to kidnap Maria and "dispose" of her, so that he could grasp the throne. Captured and sold into slavery, Maria makes a spectacular escape and finds her way to a desert oasis, where Jon Hall and Andy Devine, two vagabonds, rescue her. All three go to a nearby village only to fall into the hands of the slave trader's henchmen. Just as they are about to be executed, Bey and his men arrive in the village, rescuing them in a rousing battle. Although attracted to Bey, Maria, still determined to avenge her father's death, lures him back to Khemmis. She seizes and jails him only to find herself in the same predicament when Zucco imprisons her and proclaims himself King. Hall and Devine, realizing that Maria and Bey loved each other, engineer Bey's escape. Enraged, Zucco gathers his army and compels Maria to lead him to Bey's secret mountain stronghold. There, in a climatic battle, Zucco is killed, his army destroyed, and Maria and Bey are reunited.

Edmund L. Hartmann wrote the screen play, Paul Malvern produced it, and John Rawlins directed it. The cast includes Robert Warwick, Phil Van Zandt and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

to any one city or territory, but are nation-wide. The enclosed communications, from Coast to Coast and from the Lakes to the Gulf, are representative of the experience and opinion of the independent exhibitors of the United States."

Mr. Myers pointed out that the reports transmitted disclose that, prior to the WPB's order curtailing the number of prints, "the distributors already had reduced the number of prints per picture to such an extent that the independent subsequent runs have been put far behind in playing time. . . . In many cases prints were made available to theatres in accordance with the admission prices charged—the high price theatres first, the low price theatres later." In the Wisconsin territory, for example, Mr. Myers said, "houses that should play on 30c availability now have to play on what should be the 15c and 20c availabilities and the end is not in sight."

"But even more serious," continues Mr. Myers, "is the advantage which the distributors are taking of the condition, and will continue to take as the print situation grows more acute. They use the shortage not only to increase the clearance which their affiliated theatres enjoy over the independent subsequent-runs . . . but actually to extract higher film rentals from the independents. The situation is further complicated by the restrictions on the decline in delivery service . . . and increased problems in booking prints into the theatres. . . . Also, the subsequent-run theatres will be compelled to accept worn, patched, and 'rainy' prints which are unsatisfactory to projectionists and the public alike and involve a definite fire hazard."

Stating that the exhibitors have suggested other and less burdensome ways of saving film than by a reduction of prints, Mr. Myers submitted for Mr. Adams' consideration the following suggestions: "Elimination of useless film credits—only the title, cast and names of the producer and director are of possible interest; elimination of unnecessary duplication of newsreel shots; reduction of the number of short-subjects which exhibitors must often buy and cannot use; reduction in the number of over-length features; greater care at the studios."

Charging that the producer-distributors have an antagonistic interest or have shown complete indifference to many of the exhibitors' hardships and difficulties, Mr. Myers concluded his letter to Mr. Adams with a request that he invite representatives of independent exhibitors, chosen from the Theatres Advisory Committee, to participate in future meetings, especially the one tentatively set for March 15, for the consideration of film allocations.

Allied is to be commended for compiling a report that is representative, not only of the opinions of independent exhibitors, but also of conditions in different parts of the country.

Thus far, Mr. Adams has given assurances that the "WPB will not permit, because of the reductions in raw stock quotas, anyone to have an advantage to the disadvantage of anyone else. The distribution of prints must be on a fair and equal basis for all. Any indications to the contrary will bring immediate action for relief by the WPB."

The information gathered and submitted to Mr. Adams by Allied should certainly indicate to him that the present distribution of available prints is not being made on an equitable basis, and that the need of regulatory control over the distributors' use of raw

stock is a matter of vital interest to the independent exhibitors, whose equity in the raw stock is undeniable.

HARRISON'S REPORTS feels sure that at the next meeting between the WPB and the Industry's advisory Committee on Raw Stock, which has now been set definitely for March 16, exhibition will be given the representation it so rightly deserves.

\* \* \*

While on the subject of raw stock, let us look at a recent development:

*Motion Picture Daily* reports that the British Government's Board of Trade, concerned over the responsibility that British films may be frozen out of the American market, because of the raw stock shortage, has asked the British Embassy in Washington to take the matter up with the WPB.

According to the *Daily*, the possibility exists that the British film industry, unless helped by the WPB, may attempt to secure raw stock for pictures to be distributed in this country from stock the American distributors are now using in Britain for the distribution of American pictures. The British market being the most lucrative of all foreign markets, it follows that the American distributors would find themselves in a most difficult position in the event Britain adopted retaliatory measures with respect to raw stock. Meanwhile the *Daily* credits Stanley Adams of the WPB with stating that his agency "has no intention of discriminating against foreign producers."

The position of the British producer-distributors is worthy of consideration. One cannot blame them for seeking as fair treatment in this country as is accorded the American producer-distributors in Britain. Our foreign commerce depends largely on give-and-take relations, and it would seem that the British request for an allotment of raw stock to take care of their producer-distributors' needs in this country is one that cannot be turned aside lightly.

The fact remains, however, that no matter how the problem should be solved, it will result in a further tightening of the print situation in this country. And any matter that affects the print situation is of vital concern to the exhibitors.

In seeking to placate the British producer-distributors, the WPB will undoubtedly confer with the Industry's Advisory Committee in order to work out an equitable arrangement. But unless that Committee includes representation for the exhibitors, the outcome of the conference may be an arrangement that will protect the interests of the producer-distributors of both countries at the expense of the American exhibitor.

### NO LAGGARDS, PLEASE!

On Wednesday of this week, the committee in charge of the industry's Red Cross Drive reported that 13,937 theatres, out of a possible 16,478, had pledged themselves to participate in the Drive, which starts Thursday, March 15 and ends on March 21.

The committee pointed out that this number exceeds by more than 500 the number of theatres that participated in last year's drive.

It is indeed a remarkable achievement. But what excuse have the 2,541 theatres that have not yet sent in their pledge? There can be no excuse! Send that pledge in immediately!



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

## Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....	\$15.00
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New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 1945

No. 11

### PERCENTAGE CHECKING IN SMALL-TOWN THEATRES

A mid-western exhibitor, who wishes his name withheld, has sent this office a lengthy communication in which he claims that the checking of percentage pictures "is becoming a menace to small-town exhibitors," not because of the checking in itself, but because the film companies and their checking agencies are employing, as he says, improper, inexperienced and untrained personnel to do the checking.

This exhibitor states that, quite often, the checkers employed live in either the town in which the theatre is located or a town nearby and, since they have many friends locally, the theatre's box-office receipts become known to the entire community. This in turn serves to encourage non-show people to open an opposition house.

One of the chief complaints voiced by this exhibitor concerns the hiring of local bank employees and attorneys to do the checking. "There are several lawyers in our city," he states, "all of whom are, I believe, my friends. Now if one of these lawyers came to my theatre to check it, all the others would know that he was there and they would wonder whether I had been put under some kind of judgment or legal restraint relating to some phase of the law, or whether I was in debt to some one and that the money was being collected by the lawyer. Being my friends, some of these lawyers might question me, and it will be difficult for them to understand why a film company finds it necessary to employ a lawyer to collect rental from me. This would be a direct reflection on my character. The same holds true when bank employees are hired as checkers. There are two banks in our city, and I do business with both banks and have the confidence of both. If an employee of either of them showed up in my theatre as a checker, the other bank would at once become suspicious and could not be made to understand it. Under such conditions, I would stand the risk of losing the friendship and good will of a bank."

The inexperienced checker, continues this exhibitor, is probably the worst of the lot, because he knows very little about the correct methods of checking, and less about the preparation of his reports. As a result, he constantly annoys the exhibitor with requests for guidance and assistance. Frequently, an honest exhibitor, to protect himself, finds it necessary to make out the complete report himself, in order to be sure that it is correct.

Stressing that he does not want to be arbitrary about checking, because he realizes that, where there is a partnership engagement on a picture, both parties should be represented, this exhibitor concludes that "so long as the film companies are going to have percentage pictures, and use checkers, they should em-

ploy high-type persons with a complete knowledge of show business. Persons of this type would be a credit to both the theatres and the film companies, and would be welcomed by honest exhibitors. With the conditions prevailing today, however, this is impossible. Consequently, where the film companies do not have a capable checker, they should take a chance on getting what is coming to them or sell the pictures flat."

The complaints voiced by this exhibitor present nothing new, but they do serve to point up a long-standing condition that deserves the thoughtful consideration of the film companies and their checking agencies.

While HARRISON'S REPORTS recognizes the problem, it cannot agree with some of the opinions of this mid-western exhibitor. For example, he asks on the one hand that only high-type persons be employed to do the checking, and on the other hand he rules out bank employees and lawyers, who are as a rule fairly intelligent people, either licensed or bonded, and well trained both in the art of being tactful and in the ethics against divulging confidential information. If they are unsuitable for checking, then just who is acceptable? Let us assume for argument's sake that bank employees and lawyers would be acceptable provided they came from a distant town. In most cases, the time required to travel back and forth would undoubtedly interfere with their regular business affairs, and they would either be unable to accept the assignment or find it unprofitable. Assuming, however, that some of them could arrange their affairs to accept the assignment, the cost of hiring them would probably be prohibitive. It should be remembered that, although the cost of hiring checkers is paid by the film companies, the cost is reflected in the percentage terms charged the exhibitor.

As for the statement that checkers, in addition to being high-type persons, should have a thorough knowledge of show business, it is difficult to imagine such a person devoting his time to checking in view of the relatively low wages paid to checkers; if he had a thorough knowledge of the business, he would certainly want a more interesting and more profitable job.

The exhibitor admits that, in these times, it is practically impossible to hire capable men to do the checking and, as a solution, he suggests that the "companies should take a chance on getting what is coming to them or sell the pictures flat." This is indeed a simple solution from the standpoint of the exhibitor, but it offers nothing that would make it attractive to the distributors. They want percentage pictures, and these require checking. Should they be willing to revert to flat rental pictures, they would undoubtedly

(Continued on last page)

**"John Dillinger" with Lawrence Tierney,  
Edmund Lowe and Anne Jeffreys**  
(*Monogram, Feb. 23; time, 71 min.*)

The value of this picture to exhibitors depends on whether their customers like gangster pictures or not, for this is a gangster melodrama with gangsterism served by the carload. Supposedly biographical of John Dillinger's sordid life of crime, the story is a rehash of the old gangster theme in which Dillinger, effectively portrayed by Lawrence Tierney, a newcomer, is presented as a ruthless criminal, without any sense of justice, who does not hesitate to shoot people if they happen to be in his way. The plot is somewhat episodic, and the action slows down occasionally, but it has enough ruthless gang killings, bank robberies, and daring escapes to satisfy the followers of this type of entertainment. Because of Dillinger's notorious reputation, the picture lends itself well to exploitation. It is, however, an unpleasant entertainment:—

Dillinger, a petty thief, is caught robbing a storekeeper. He is sentenced to six months in prison, where he cultivates the friendship of Specs (Edmund Lowe), Murph (Eduardo Ciannelli), and Kirk (Marc Lawrence), all dangerous criminals. Upon his release, Dillinger stages several small robberies and becomes friendly with Helen (Anne Jeffreys), who becomes his "moll." He smuggles guns to his pals in prison, helping them to shoot their way out. Specs takes charge of the gang and leads them on a series of sensational bank robberies, but Dillinger eventually challenges his leadership and becomes head of the gang. While hiding out in Tuscon, Arizona, Dillinger visits a dentist's office, where the police, "tipped off" by Specs, capture him. Fashioning a fake gun from a block of wood, Dillinger escapes jail and rejoins the gang. He suspects the deposed Specs of causing his arrest, and kills him. Badly in need of funds, the gang next attempts a mail car robbery, but the clerks shoot it out with them, killing Kirk and wounding Dillinger. Discovering that Helen intended to run off with Tony (Ralph Lewis), a new gang member, Dillinger kills him and forces Helen to flee with him to Chicago. There, after a number of months, Helen becomes tired of hiding out in a dingy room; she induces him to attend a picture show, and "tips off" the FBI. The Government men kill him when he emerges from the theatre and starts a gun battle.

Phil Yordon wrote the screen play, the King Brothers produced it, and Max Nosseck directed it. The cast includes Ludwig Stossel, Else Jannsen and others.

Definitely too brutal for children.

**"Brewster's Millions" with Dennis O'Keefe,  
Helen Walker and June Havoc**  
(*United Artists, no release date set; time 79 min.*)

A highly amusing farce-comedy. In spite of the fact that it has been produced twice before in this country (by Paramount in 1915 and 1921), and once in England (distributed through United Artists in 1935), the picture should still give satisfaction to those who had seen the previous versions, and it will undoubtedly prove very entertaining to those seeing it for the first time. The story has been brought up to date, but it remains basically the same, with hilarious situations originating from the hero's endeavors

to fulfill a stipulation in his eccentric uncle's will—that he spend one million dollars within sixty days, in order to inherit an additional seven million. Dennis O'Keefe does his best work yet as the harassed heir, provoking many laughs by the predicaments he gets himself into, because, according to the terms of the will, he cannot disclose his reason for spending money lavishly, causing his sweetheart and friends to think him insane. The pace is fast and the production values are good:—

On the eve of his long-postponed wedding to Helen Walker, O'Keefe, an honorably discharged veteran, learns of his inheritance and of the stipulations in the will, which included also a provision that he do not marry during the time he tries to spend the million dollars. Renting the royal suite at an expensive hotel and an entire floor of a huge office building, O'Keefe forms an investment company and employs Helen, as his secretary, Joe Sawyer and Herbert Rudley, his war buddies, as assistants, and Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Helen's houseman, as general helper, paying each of them a fabulous salary. Much to the bewilderment and consternation of his friends, O'Keefe embarks on a lavish spending spree. He invests heavily in crack-pot inventions; backs a failing musical comedy show produced by Mischa Auer and starring June Havoc; enlists the aid of Gail Patrick, a spend-thrift society girl; buys worthless stocks and bonds; and deposits money in a bank that is virtually bankrupt. He rids himself of \$300,000 within a week only to find himself with more money than he started with when some of the investments turn out profitable. Meanwhile he has romantic difficulties with Helen because of his inability to explain his association with June and with Gail. Hampered by his friends who try desperately to curb his spending, and by unwanted profits, O'Keefe, after two months of frantic efforts, just about manages to dispose of the one million dollars in time to gain the balance of the estate.

Siegfried Herzig, Charles Rogers and Wilkie Mahoney wrote the screen play based on the play by Winchell Smith and Byron Ongley, Edward Small produced it, and Allan Dwan directed it. The cast includes Nana Bryant, Neil Hamilton, John Litel, Thurston Hall and others.

**"Escape in the Fog" with William Wright,  
Otto Kruger and Nina Foch**

(*Columbia, no release date set; time, 63 min.*)

A typical low-budget Columbia program picture, unpretentious and only mildly interesting. It is one of those implausible espionage melodramas that may get by with those who can overlook the far-fetched story and the illogical plot developments. The story is patterned along familiar lines, with typical melodramatic situations brought about by the plots and counterplots of the spies and the Government agents. The closing scenes, where the hero and the heroine are saved from death and the spies captured, provide the most excitement, but hardly the sort to impress discriminating patrons:—

Nina Foch, a Navy nurse suffering from nervous shock, has a nightmare in which she dreams that two men are trying to kill a third as she walks across a bridge. Her screams awaken William Wright, an occupant of the rooming house, whom Nina recognizes



as the man attacked in her dream. Lunching with Wright on the following day, Nina learns that he is a secret Government agent. They fall in love, and Wright invites her to visit San Francisco with him. There, Otto Kruger, Wright's chief, gives him an important document to be delivered in Hong Kong. Meanwhile Konstantin Shayne, a German spy posing as a watchmaker, had hidden a recording device in Kruger's home, enabling him to learn of Wright's secret mission. He and his agents trick Wright into a taxi and drive towards a bridge. Just then, Nina is knocked unconscious by a passing car and the same dream she had before comes to her. Recovering, she hurries to the bridge, arriving in time to scare off the spies just as they attack Wright. Meanwhile Wright, to save the document, had thrown it over the bridge and into the bay. He enlists the aid of the Navy to search for it. The spies, through an advertisement, trick Nina into coming to their hideout in the belief that they had found the document. Shayne sends Wright a note threatening to kill Nina unless he produced the document. Wright, in a desperate effort to save her, falls into their clutches. The document is taken from him, and both are left to die in a gas-filled room. But Wright, through an ingenious trick, notifies the police of his predicament, and they arrive in time to effect their rescue and to capture the spies.

Aubrey Wisberg wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Oscar Boetticher, Jr. directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Fog Island" with George Zucco and Lionel Atwill**

(PRC, Feb. 15; time, 70 min.)

Fairly good program entertainment. It is an eerie murder mystery melodrama revolving around an embittered financier who formulates a plan to avenge himself against group of greedy associates, one of whom had murdered his wife. The lone mansion in which the action takes place, and the eerie underground settings, provide an effective background for the bizarre happenings. It holds one in suspense because several persons are under suspicion, and it is baffling enough to satisfy the followers of the type of pictures. The closing scenes are filled with excitement. There, the mercenary associates are trapped in an underground vault, drowning when an ingenious device rigged up by the financier fills it with water. The sustained suspense is due mainly to Terry Morse's capable direction. There is some romantic interest but it is unimportant:—

Retiring to a fog-shrouded island after serving a prison term for embezzlement, George Zucco, plans revenge on the group of greedy associates who had been responsible for his incarceration and for the murder of his wife. He sends invitations to Lionel Atwill, a crooked lawyer, Jerome Cowan, a shady promoter, Veda Ann Borg, his former secretary, and Jacqueline DeWitt, a fake clairvoyant, inviting them to the island. Each accepts in the belief that Zucco has cached a stolen fortune on the island and meant to "cut them in." When they arrive, Zucco bluntly tells them that he intended to uncover his wife's murderer, and gives each one a "clue" to the supposedly hidden fortune. Distrusting one another, the associates prowling about the house following up their

clues to the money. Zucco, trailing each one, discovers that Atwill had murdered his wife. Accused, Atwill murders the financier, but Zucco's carefully laid plan for revenge continues despite his death. In the search for the fortune, two more murders are committed before the remaining members find indications that the "money" was buried in an underground vault. All agree to share equally and begin to dig for the strong-box. Their digging sets off a device that locks the door and causes the vault to fill with water. Before all are destroyed by their own greed, they discover that Zucco's hidden fortune was a myth.

Pierre Gendron wrote the screen play and Leon Fromkess produced it. The cast includes Ian Keith, Sharon Douglas, John Whitney and others.

The murders make it too gruesome for children.

### **"Hollywood and Vine" with James Ellison and Wanda McKay**

(PRC, April 25; time, 58 min.)

An entertaining program comedy-romance. Although the story is loosely written and it has its share of foolishness, it holds one's attention because of the amusing characterizations and the well conceived farcical situations. Moreover, the Hollywood background should prove interesting to most patrons. There are several spots that provoke hearty laughter; as a matter of fact, there is hardly a dull moment. It goes in for some good-natured kidding of the motion picture business and of some Hollywood characters. The performances are engaging:—

On her way to Hollywood to seek a movie career, Wanda McKay stops at a hamburger stand, where she attracts the attention of James Ellison, a successful studio writer. When Wanda leaves, Ellison, noticing a small dog in the place, believes that she had left it behind. He takes the dog and follows her to Hollywood, where, using a fictitious name, he rents a cottage next to her bungalow. Wanda denies ownership of the dog but offers to take care of it. A romance develops between the two and, Ellison, to be near Wanda, secures a job as a soda clerk in a drugstore, where Wanda worked as a cashier. Meanwhile Ellison's studio carries on a frantic search for him until June Clyde, a glamorous actress, who hoped to marry Ellison, locates him in the drugstore. Wanda, learning of his masquerade, determines to forget about him and concentrate upon her career. One day, when Wanda visits a studio, her dog wanders onto a set and is chosen by Leon Belasco, an eccentric director, to play a part in his forthcoming picture. The dog becomes popular nationally and, at the height of its success, a law suit is brought against Wanda and the studio by a woman claiming ownership of the dog. Just as Wanda is about to lose the dog at the trial, Ellison, who had been carrying on an investigation secretly, arrives in court with conclusive evidence proving the woman's claim false. Wanda, Ellison, and the dog leave the courtroom reunited happily.

Edith Watkins and Charles Williams wrote the screen play, Leon Fromkess produced it, and Alexis Thurn-Taxis directed it. The cast includes Ralph Morgan, Franklyn Pangborn, Emmett Lynn and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

set the rentals high enough to give them the profit they believe the pictures should earn, and these would be much too high for the average small-town exhibitor to meet.

Though we disagree with some of the views expounded by this exhibitor, the fact remains that the problem of checking theatre receipts in small towns has yet to be solved adequately. The stationing in either a theatre box-office or lobby of unfamiliar and unregulated persons, some of whom are uncouth and unreliable, has long been a thorn in the exhibitor's side. Moreover, their very presence and lack of diplomacy often serve to cast doubts on the integrity of the exhibitor. Yet we cannot get away from the fact that checking, because of the low wages and because most of it is part-time work, is not the type of employment to attract the most capable and efficient men.

Recently five distributing companies, namely, Paramount, RKO, Universal, United Artists, and Columbia organized a new national checking organization, the purpose of which is to provide them with a checking service operated on a non-profit basis. This new organization, known as Confidential Reports, Inc., begins operating on April 2 under the active supervision of Jack H. Levin, Vice President and General Manager, who, for the past seventeen years, had been associated with the Copyright Protection Bureau, from which he resigned about two weeks ago. John J. O'Connor, Vice President of Universal, is President of the new organization, which plans to have thirty-one branches located in the key city distribution centers, and whose services will be available to all producers and distributors.

At a trade press luncheon announcing the formation of the organization, Mr. Levin said that it was "the aim of Confidential Reports, Inc., to render, confidentially, checking reports, so as to provide the distributor and exhibitor alike with a sound and objective basis for the conduct of their business with each other. We anticipate the good will of the entire industry in achieving this purpose."

As said before, the problem of checking small-town theatres in a manner that will not do an injustice to the exhibitor has yet to be solved adequately. Perhaps Confidential Reports, in an endeavor to fulfill its aims, will make an effort to provide the industry with a corps of checkers who will be thoroughly trained in the art of making themselves inconspicuous and who will in no way make their stay at a theatre an obnoxious one. At any rate, the problem presents a challenge to this new checking organization.

### **MORE DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES NEEDED FOR THE GOOD OF THE BUSINESS**

In an interview he gave to *Motion Picture Daily* of March 1, David Loew said that, after the war, other distribution companies will be formed as a result of the demand of independent producers for outside distribution.

Mr. Loew believes that, if new major distribution concerns were formed, there would be a rush to make deals in order to share in the distribution of their pictures as well as in the production of them.

This paper does not know what has prompted Mr. Loew, who is now releasing his pictures through United Artists, to make such a statement, but for some time now there has been talk of the need of new

distribution companies to encourage new production and star talent.

Under the present setup, there is very little encouragement of independent production. Five of the companies own theatres and, with the exception of RKO, their doors are virtually closed to the independent producer seeking a release for his pictures. Of the companies that do not own theatres, only United Artists releases independently produced pictures, but the difficulties of releasing pictures through United Artists are, at present, almost insurmountable. To begin with, when an independent producer approaches United Artists with a good story, the first question that he is asked is: "What star is going to be in it?" And with the present scarcity of free-lance stars, he hasn't a chance to get a releasing agreement.

Monogram is the only other company that will accept independent producer deals, but its distribution terms are so high that it is difficult for a producer to come out with a profit, for Monogram demands for distribution fifty percent of the gross receipts, regardless of the amount of money that an independent producer may intend to spend on his picture.

Distribution has always been more or less closed to independent brains. In many cases where an independent, without a star, or a best seller, or a successful Broadway play, approached any one of the distribution companies, the answer of its executives was and still is: "Why should we give you a releasing agreement and receive only a small portion of the gross receipts when we can spend all the money ourselves and receive all the profits?"

Several years ago a friend of mine approached one of the top executives of the old Universal for a releasing deal. I had arranged a luncheon for him and so I was present. When this executive made the aforementioned statement to my friend, I begged leave to answer him myself; I said: "For the same reason that interbreeding should be avoided. When you fail to bring into your company new blood, the pictures it produces are similar to one another—there is no variety. Eventually people get tired of such pictures and stop going to see them. That is what is going to happen to Universal, and unless you infuse new blood and make deals with people who will bring new ideas into your company, it will go out of business." Not long after, the old crowd sold the company to a new group. And the new owners made a success of it because they went into the company with new ideas.

If one should watch the product of each company closely, he would find that there is a similarity in the pictures produced by it, by reason of the fact that the stories are ultimately passed upon by a handful of the same people, with the result that the viewpoint of these people colors all its pictures.

Mr. Loew is right: new distribution companies will be formed after the war; there is need for them—a need for distribution companies that will encourage people with brains and capital, able to produce good pictures. Such companies cannot help proving financially successful. And the independent exhibitors will profit by whatever support they give to such companies, for at present the industry is a virtual monopoly, and the only way to break it is to encourage and support new production and distribution.



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United States .....\$15.00  
U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50  
Canada ..... 16.50  
Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50  
Great Britain ..... 15.75  
Australia, New Zealand,  
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35c a Copy

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Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

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Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1945

No. 12

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## Public Relations and the War Activities Committee

Administrator Chester Bowles, of the OPA, has recommended to Congress that a ceiling be put on the admission prices of theatres.

James F. Byrnes, Director of the Office of War Mobilization, in his curfew announcement, "lumped" theatres in with saloons, dance halls, gambling joints and other riffraff of the entertainment world, although it was obvious that very few theatres remained open after midnight.

While the War Production Board has given the theatres a fair priority on repair parts and equipment replacements, War Manpower Chief McNutt has placed theatre employees on the non-deferrable list and, in addition, has issued a follow-up on the curfew in which he, too, lists the theatres with the "joints."

Whenever a fuel shortage has threatened, Federal, State and Municipal officials have been quick to advocate the closing of theatres, although keeping the theatres open undoubtedly would save fuel, since many theatre-goers turn down their furnaces before leaving for the theatre.

To the foregoing may be added the doubling of the Federal tax on admissions, the denial of Freon to the theatres, the serious reduction in the allocation of raw film stock, causing a print shortage, and the imposition of an almost total blackout on a business that has always been characterized by an abundance of light—light being its trade mark.

Let us review very briefly—for the facts are well known—the many contributions that the motion picture industry has made to the war effort. The industry has—

(1) Taken the lead in every war loan drive. So successful have the theatres been that Secretary Morgenthau has referred to them as "the cash registers of the Treasury."

(2) Placed the screens unreservedly at the disposal of the Government for purposes of education and indoctrination, without cost to the Government.

(3) Supported all Red Cross, USO and Infantile Paralysis drives, collecting vast sums for those agencies and thus insuring their continuance and success.

(4) Produced and distributed short subjects for the Government, at cost.

(5) Rendered to the Government every aid in the war effort whenever requested or needed.

It is obvious, therefore, that the public relations of the motion picture industry have broken down just when they were needed most. When the industry, in aid of the war effort, is functioning as a whole, the industry, in its public relations, should be represented as a whole. The War Activities Committee would seem to be, in theory at least, the ideal agency for the handling of public relations during war-time. The results, as already outlined, show that it has failed in this regard. Let us inquire as to the reasons for this failure.

At its annual directors meeting, held recently in Columbus, Ohio, Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors adopted a resolution praising the War Activities Committee for its accomplishments in support of the war effort, and pledging Allied's continued loyal support in all

matters affecting that effort, but suggesting that certain reforms be made in its procedure and that it be terminated at the end of the war. Immediately there was an outcry by certain persons in the industry accusing Allied of being unpatriotic, and by that resolution hampering the war effort. Since the resolution heaped praise on the WAC and pledged continued support, and since its name implies that the WAC was formed merely for war purposes, it is absurd to say that Allied either hampered the war effort, or intended to hamper it.

In heaping abuse upon Allied, these critics either overlooked, or intentionally hid, the reason that undoubtedly prompted Allied's action. Throughout the Sixth War Loan drive, spokesmen for the distributors, at practically every meeting, advocated continuing the WAC as an all-industry good-will agency. While using such phrases as "all-industry," "united front" and "unity," these speakers were, nevertheless, advocating the perpetuation of the WAC as it had been operating. This reached a climax when Ted Gamble, National Director, War Finance Division, U. S. Treasury, at the annual meeting of the Variety Clubs of America, held in Washington, D. C., last November, forgot that this was not a political, but a charitable organization, and dipped into industry politics by advising exhibitors that theatre divorcement will not solve their problems, and by expressing the hope that the War Activities Committee would be continued even after the war.

It now transpires that not only Allied, but other exhibitors who do not belong to Allied, became alarmed by these tactics, and at the meeting of the WAC's Executive Committee, Theatres Division, on November 30, 1944, caused a resolution to be adopted to the effect that representatives of the WAC should cease advocating the perpetuation of that organization after the war. Thus the Allied board merely voiced a sentiment that had already been approved by the Theatres Division of the WAC!

In the condemnation of Allied's resolution, one passage of the resolution was ignored, and that passage should now be considered calmly and dispassionately by all members of the industry. It states, in part: "the Committee goes far beyond its original purpose when . . . it names individuals familiar with conditions in only a single film territory to represent and speak for the entire industry in reference to manpower and material shortages, fuel conservation, or other matters not within the original intentment of the Committee."

The WAC's letterhead shows it to be, in form, an all-industry organization. The Co-Ordinating Committee of the WAC includes in its membership the cream of the industry. Obviously, that Committee could exert tremendous influence and create invaluable good will by functioning as a body. Yet the extent to which the Committee has actually been consulted in the operation of the WAC is questionable.

Why hasn't the Co-Ordinating Committee conferred with the President, the WPB, the WMC, the OPA, the OWM  
(Continued on last page)

**"The Royal Scandal" with  
Tallulah Bankhead, Charles Coburn,  
Anne Baxter and William Eythe**

(20th Century-Fox, April; time, 94 min.)

An excellent Ernst Lubitsch comedy-farce; the settings are magnificent, the direction brilliant, and the performances of the entire cast fine. Highly sophisticated, the story is a gay version of Catherine the Great's amorous inclinations, concentrating on her affair with an impetuous but not too bright young officer, whose fiancée was one of her ladies-in-waiting. Cleverly worked into the story is a by-plot concerning the machinations of a palace military clique, who scheme to seize the throne. The resultant situations, together with the extremely clever dialogue, keep one laughing hilariously all the way through. Tallulah Bankhead, as the Czarina, is dynamic and convincing in a role of many moods, and the others in the cast play their parts to perfection. The theme is risqué, but it has been handled so expertly that it does not offend. The picture should turn out to be an outstanding box-office attraction:—

Beset by unrest among her military leaders, the Czarina rules Russia with the aid of her wily Chancellor (Charles Coburn), on whom she depended heavily. The palace is turned into a furore when Lieut. William Eythe, a dashing young cavalryman, rides in from the Western front to warn the Czarina of a military plot to dethrone her. The handsome young officer wins the Czarina's gratitude and likewise her heart. She commands him to remain at the court indefinitely, raising his rank to Commander of the Palace Guards. Bewildered, but flattered by the Czarina's attentions and amorous advances, Eythe pictures himself as a great leader and embarks on a program for the betterment of Russian peasants. He issues numerous edicts, all of which find their way into the wastebasket at the direction of the Czarina. Complications arise when the Czarina learns that Eythe was engaged to Anne Baxter, one of her ladies-in-waiting. She shrewdly arranges for Anne to leave the palace for a long rest, but Anne, aware of her motive defies her. Indignant, the Czarina plans to punish both Anne and Eythe. The young officer, humiliated by her treatment of him, rebels; he joins the Palace Guards in a plot to dethrone her. The sly old Chancellor, however, foils the plot. Eythe is found guilty of treason and sentenced to die. But through the Chancellor's shrewd manipulations, he is pardoned by the Czarina when she turns her fickle attentions upon Vincent Price, the newly-arrived handsome French ambassador.

Edwin Justus Mayer wrote the screen play, and Otto Preminger directed it. The cast includes Mischa Auer, Sig Ruman, Vladimir Sokoloff, Mikhail Rasumny and others.

Adult entertainment.

**"The House of Fear" with Basil Rathbone  
and Nigel Bruce**

(Universal, March 16; time, 68 min.)

This latest of the "Sherlock Holmes" murder mystery melodramas is below par for the series. It should, however, serve its purpose as a supporting feature. There is nothing unusual about the production, most of it being repetitious of the previous pictures. The story and treatment follow the usual formula—that is, mysterious murders are committed, "Holmes" is called in on the case, and through his amazing though implausible powers of deduction, and with the aid of his trusty friend, "Dr. Watson," clears up the mystery. The action slows down considerably in spots, and the suspense usually found in pictures of this type is lacking:—

Called upon to solve the mysterious deaths of two wealthy men, members of an exclusive club known as "The Good Comrades," Holmes (Basil Rathbone), accompanied by his friend, Dr. Watson (Nigel Bruce), goes to the Scottish mansion where the club members lived. There he learns that each of the members, of whom five were alive, carried a large insurance policy upon himself, payable to the last surviving

member of the club. Holmes learns also that, in each death, the victim was so mutilated that his body was barely recognizable. Different clues lead Holmes to suspect one or another of the members of murdering his comrades and, during his investigation, additional murders are committed until the club is reduced to two surviving members. Meanwhile several attempts are made on his and Dr. Watson's life. Holmes finally discovers a solution to the crimes through the murder of a village tobacconist, who had been shot after declaring that he had seen one of the murdered men walking on the beach. Following up this clue, Holmes discovers an underground tunnel leading from the mansion to the sea, where he finds the supposedly murdered club members very much alive. He proves that they had robbed graves and had disguised the corpses to appear like each of them in an ingenious scheme to collect the insurance money.

Roy Chanslor wrote the screen play based on the "Adventures of the Five Orange Pips" by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Roy Williams Neill produced and directed it. The cast includes Aubrey Mather, Dennis Hoey, Paul Cavanagh and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"The Clock" with Judy Garland  
and Robert Walker**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

Fairly good mass entertainment. It is a timely romantic drama, appealingly told and well acted, revolving around the experiences of a lonely young soldier and a girl, who meet, fall in love, and marry, all within his forty-eight hour furlough, prior to being shipped overseas. The story is simple and somewhat contrived, but it appeals to the emotions of sympathy deeply, and it will be appreciated by the masses because it concerns romantic problems similar to those confronting many young people today. The most touching scenes take place toward the finish where, with but a few hours left of the young man's furlough, the couple decide to get married only to lose each other in a subway rush and to encounter numerous legal difficulties. It has some good comedy situations, particularly the one in which Keenan Wynn appears as an oratorical drunkard. People who have never visited New York should find the backgrounds interesting, for they provide a pretty good view of the city's famous landmarks. The production values are in keeping with the usual MGM standard of excellence:—

Corporal Robert Walker, visiting New York on a forty-eight hour furlough, meets Judy Garland, a young office worker, when she accidentally trips over his suitcase. Awed by the immensity of the city, and feeling lonely, Walker asks Judy for permission to ride with her on a Fifth Avenue bus. Judy consents and, after spending the afternoon with him, agrees to go out with him that evening. The end of the evening finds them both deeply in love. When they miss the last bus home, James Gleason, a milk truck driver, offers them a lift. They spend the night with him, helping to deliver milk, then accept his invitation to breakfast at his home. There, Gleason's wife (Lucile Gleason) urges them to get married at once instead of waiting until after the war. The young couple accept her suggestion and rush to City Hall for a marriage license. They become separated in the subway, and for the first time realize that neither knew the other's last name. After frantic attempts to find each other, they meet once again in Pennsylvania Station. They are finally married at City Hall after overcoming countless legalities, but as they leave the building they feel strange and uncomfortable. Passing a church, both enter and solemnly repeat to each other their marriage vows. On the following morning, they part, confident that they will soon be reunited.

Robert Nathan and Joseph Schrank wrote the screen play, Arthur Freed produced it, and Vincente Minnelli directed it. The cast includes Marshall Thompson, Ruth Brady, and others.



### **"Colonel Blimp" with Anton Walbrook, Roger Livesey and Deborah Kerr**

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 148 min.)

No one can deny the excellence of both the production and the acting given to this British-made, Technicolor comedy-drama, but its appeal will be mainly to high class audiences, who will better understand the story's objective, which seems to be that war with Germany cannot be fought on a sportsmanship basis. Centering mainly around one character, the story covers the career of a British Army officer from the time of the Boer War to the present conflict, showing how with the passing years he progressed in rank but remained old-fashioned in his ideas of warfare, maintaining that Britain, despite Germany's atrocities and her refusal to recognize accepted rules of warfare, should employ the honorable methods of his Boer War Campaign days. The manner in which he is made to realize that his ideas are antiquated, provides some highly humorous as well as deeply stirring moments. Roger Livesey, as the British officer, is properly dashing a young man, and typically pompous as an older man, but at all times thoroughly human and lovable. Anton Walbrook, as the young German officer who in later years becomes a strong anti-Nazi refugee, highly critical of the British, gives an outstanding performance. There is a pleasant romantic interest intertwined in the plot. Since the players are not well known to American audiences, the picture will require extensive exploitation.

As a young officer at the turn of the century, Livesey is shown becoming involved in a political brawl in Berlin with an anti-British propagandist, whose friends, seeking satisfaction, force him to fight a duel with a German officer (Walbrook). In the hospital to which both are taken, Livesey and Walbrook become fast friends. Deborah Kerr, an English governess in Berlin, to whom the duel had been attributed to avoid international complications, falls in love with Walbrook and marries him. Too late, Livesey realizes that he, too, loved her, but he gallantly returns to England. With the passing years, he becomes a Colonel during World War I, at which time he again meets Walbrook, now a prisoner of war. But Livesey treats him as a friend. World War II finds Livesey, now an elderly man, on active duty, and Walbrook, who, too, was along in years, a refugee from Nazidom. Livesey becomes depressed when the War Office retires him because of his outmoded ideas, but Walbrook persuades him to help organize the Home Guard. He plunges into the work with vigor, but his ideas remain old fashioned. He is finally brought to a realization of his antiquated methods when, during a sham battle staged by the Home Guard, the "attackers" ignore the rules of warfare and take him "prisoner" while he enjoys a Turkish bath.

The screen play was written, produced and directed by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Man Who Walked Alone" with David O'Brien and Kay Aldridge**

(PRC, March 15; time, 73 min.)

Just a moderately amusing romantic comedy of program grade; its appeal will be mainly to indiscriminating audiences in small-town and neighborhood theatres. Revolving around the romantic bickering between a returning war hero and a madcap heiress, who seeks to rid herself of her stuffed-shirt fiance, the story is so thin and so obvious that one knows in advance just what is going to happen. Another fault is that it is too "talky," slowing the action down considerably. It has a number of amusing episodes, but a good deal of the comedy is quite feeble. The performances are just passable:—

Hitchhiking to a small town, David O'Brien, an honorably discharged veteran, is given a lift by Kay Aldridge, a wealthy society girl, who had deserted her fiance (Smith Ballaw), taking his car without his permission. Kay and O'Brien get to bickering over a flat tire when the police, recognizing the stolen car, question them. Kay makes it

appear as if O'Brien were her accomplice. Both are taken to jail, but are released when Kay establishes her identity. Finding herself falling in love with O'Brien, Kay employs him as a chauffeur on the family's country estate. Meanwhile the newspapers print a scandalous story about her arrest and about her forsaking Ballaw for O'Brien. Her irate mother (Isabel Randolph) and her equally angry fiance rush out to the estate, accompanied by other members of the family. They make every effort to break up the romance, but Kay stands her ground. Learning that O'Brien had been a soldier, and believing him to be a deserter, Kay's mother and Ballaw telephone the authorities and demand his arrest. By this time O'Brien, disgusted with the family's attitude, decides to leave of his own accord. But before he can depart, scores of townspeople, headed by a band, march up to the estate; they had learned of his heroic deeds on the battlefronts, and the ovation was in his honor. Much to the family's chagrin, Kay takes her place at O'Brien's side, and announces her intention to marry him.

Christy Cabanne wrote the story, directed it, and acted as associate producer. Leon Fromkess produced it. The cast includes Walter Catlett, "Big Boy" Williams, Nancy June Robinson, Ruth Lee, Tom Dugan and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Without Love" with Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 111 min.)

In adapting this from the Theatre Guild's stage play of the same title, the producers have altered the plot considerably; to such an extent, in fact, that the story is unrecognizable. It is, however, an amusing comedy-drama, which should prove to be a pretty good box-office attraction because of the leading players' popularity. The story, which revolves around a young couple who marry for convenience and agree never to fall in love, is incongruous, but good performances and some bright comedy situations make it the type of entertainment that leaves an audience in a pleasant mood. Most of the comedy is brought about by the young couple's endeavors to suppress their desire for one another. There is more talk than action, but the sparkling dialogue is a compensating factor. A secondary romance between Keenan Wynn and Lucille Ball, with Patricia Morison as the other woman, provides some humorous moments:—

Seeking a house in Washington, D. C., to conduct secret experiments for his invention of an aviator's oxygen helmet, Spencer Tracy, a scientist, meets up with Keenan Wynn, an intoxicated playboy, who invites him to spend the night in a house owned by his cousin (Katharine Hepburn), a young widow. On the following morning, Katharine learns that Tracy's late father and her father had been old friends, and she agrees to let him conduct the experiments in her house. Later, both become better acquainted and learn that each was disillusioned insofar as love was concerned. Tracy had been jilted by a Parisian girl; Katharine lost her happiness through the death of her husband. When Katharine suggests that they marry purely on a platonic basis, so that she could assist him with his experiments, Tracy consents. They keep their platonic pact until Carl Esmond, a mutual friend, makes love to Katharine, awakening her love for Tracy. When he learns of Esmond's advances, Tracy suppresses his jealousy. The big test of their "loveless" marriage comes about when Katharine, learning that the Parisian girl who had jilted Tracy was trying to contact him, quarrels with him. In an endeavor to arouse Tracy, she goes out with Esmond. Her actions have the desired effect on Tracy and, after a series of incidents that cause him to suspect that she had been unfaithful, both discard their platonic pact and embrace.

Donald Ogden Stewart wrote the screen play based on the play by Philip Barry, Lawrence A. Weingarten produced it, and Harold S. Bucquet directed it. The cast includes Felix Bressart and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

and other war agencies in reference to vital industry problems?

Why has no effort been made, through the exhibitor organizations represented on the Co-Ordinating Committee, to enlist the support and influence of the rank and file of exhibitors throughout the country—the "little fellows" who, nevertheless, are able to call their Washington representatives by their first names?

Why has no consideration been given to Allied's temperate criticisms and pertinent suggestions instead of allowing the matter to rest upon the intemperate outbursts and charges of a few individuals?

The writer of this article realizes that he, too, is exposing himself to a torrent of abuse; but to impute a wrong motive to this writer will do him the greatest injustice imaginable. In bringing these facts to your attention my sole purpose is to expose the weakness of the industry's public relations and to point out how they can be improved.

In order to bring this about, the WAC must be strengthened and made to function as a truly representative body. It must not become, or even appear to become, the private property of a handful of individuals. Utilizing to the fullest the manpower represented on the Co-Ordinating Committee and the Executive Committee of the Theatres Division, as well as the industry organizations represented by them, all mistakes of the past can be cured and the WAC can render a great service in restoring the prestige of the motion picture industry and elevating it in public esteem.

If that be treason, make the most of it!

### THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF 20TH CENTURY-FOX FILM CORPORATION

Next month, Twentieth Century-Fox will celebrate its Thirtieth Anniversary. It was in 1915, when William Fox released two Theda Bara pictures, "A Fool There Was" and "Kreutzer's Sonata" under the corporate name, "Fox Film Corporation." Years later this name was changed to "Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation."

Since its beginning, this company has had several outstanding periods. The first such period was, of course, its first year, because of the success that Theda Bara had made; the second was when it brought out Tom Mix, and later when it acquired the services of William Farnum, developing them into the biggest stars of those days; the third was when in 1926 Winfield Sheehan, relinquishing his home-office duties as general manager of distribution, went to the Coast and took charge of production—he produced such outstanding box-office successes as, "Seventh Heaven," "What Price Glory," "Sunny Side Up," "The Cock-Eyed World" and others, and developed such stars as Shirley Temple, Will Rogers and Janet Gaynor; the fourth was when in 1935 Sidney Kent induced Darryl Zanuck and Joseph Schenck, owners of "Twentieth Century," to amalgamate with the Fox Film Corporation; the fifth period was when Spyros Skouras, an experienced theatre operator, became president of the company. There have been other lesser periods.

The company made progress when Messrs. Zanuck and Schenck affiliated themselves with the Fox Film Corporation, but because there was lack of harmony between the Coast and the Home Office, their efforts were neutralized. As a result, the quality of the product deteriorated.

Real progress was not made until after Mr. Skouras became president of the company. With his finished diplomacy and native ability as a pacifier, Mr. Skouras was soon able to charm everybody, East and West, bringing harmony into the company's ranks, and whole-hearted cooperation between the producing and the selling organizations.

When I speak of Mr. Skouras' diplomacy and native ability as a pacifier, I speak from knowledge, for I had the opportunity of observing him from close quarters when he organized the Greek War Relief Association and drafted me

to act as publicity director of it. As president of the Association, Mr. Skouras so inspired his co-workers that, in six months' time, the Association was able to collect six million dollars in cash, at a cost of 2.7% (two dollars and seventy cents for every one hundred dollars collected), the lowest that has ever been attained in the history of relief organizations in this country. In addition to this money, the Association received food, clothing and medical supplies worth four million dollars, donated by the Red Cross and by other relief agencies. The motion picture industry itself contributed more than one million dollars. Without Mr. Skouras' tirelessness and generosity, the Association would not, in my opinion, have attained such results.

What the progress of Twentieth Century-Fox has been from the time Mr. Skouras became its president may be judged by the fact that, before he took charge, the company operated either at a loss or at a very small profit. When he became president, the company's stock was quoted in the stock market at about \$9 per share, whereas now it is quoted at about \$27 per share.

The company has announced that it is going to celebrate its 30th Anniversary with a string of big money-making pictures.

The writer takes pleasure in wishing Messrs. Skouras, Schenck, Zanuck, Tom Connors (the efficient head of world wide distribution for the company), and all their co-workers a continued success, for he feels that the success of a company in producing money-making pictures means prosperity for the exhibitors.

### "Tarzan and the Amazons" with Johnny Weissmuller

(RKO, no release date set, time, 76 min.)

Just moderately entertaining program fare, best suited for the juvenile trade. It is similar in content to the previous "Tarzan" pictures but, by comparison, is below par for the series. The story is thin and far-fetched, and it offers little to hold one's attention. The youngsters, however, should find it exciting, for the lives of the leading characters are endangered from time to time. As usual, most of the comedy is provoked by the antics of Cheta, the chimpanzee. Johnny Weissmuller, as Tarzan, and Johnny Sheffield, as Boy, his son, perform acceptably considering the weak material they had to work with:—

Journeying to a jungle trading post to welcome back his wife, Jane (Brenda Joyce), from a London visit, Tarzan, accompanied by Boy, rescue from a savage panther a runaway girl from a tribe of Amazon women. Tarzan takes the girl back to the tribe's secret village, where no man but he was permitted to enter and leave; the Amazons feared that strangers would steal their golden treasures. At the trading post, Tarzan greets Jane and meets a group of English scientists. Through a gold bracelet that Cheta had taken from the runaway girl, the scientists learn of the Amazon tribe and urge Tarzan to lead them to their secret village. Tarzan, unwilling to break faith with the Amazons, refuses. The scientists, however, egged on by Barton MacLane, a greedy trader, induce Boy to lead them to the village, telling him that he will aid the cause of civilization. The Amazons capture the intruders, and their Queen (Maria Ouspenskaya) sentences them to a life of slavery. Led by MacLane, the scientists try to escape, bearing some of the golden treasures. MacLane makes good his escape, but the others are killed. Boy is recaptured and sentenced to die. Meanwhile Tarzan, warned by Cheta, races to the village to rescue his son. En route, he encounters MacLane, who dies in an attempt to kill him. Tarzan arrives at the Amazons' village in time to convince the tribe that their secret was safe, thus gaining Boy's release.

Hans Jacoby and Marjorie L. Pfalzer wrote the screen play, Sol Lesser produced it, and Kurt Neumann directed it. The cast includes Henry Stephenson, J. M. Kerrigan, Shirley O'Hara, Steven Geray and others.



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Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 1945

No. 13

### COLUMBIA AND THE RECORD

As a tribute to General Sales Manager Abe Montague's twenty years with the company, Columbia has announced that it has named its annual sales drive the "Montague Twentieth Anniversary Campaign."

The announcement states that, during the campaign, Columbia will offer the greatest product lineup in the company's history, and tells with pride that the company has grown from a modest, humble position in the industry to one of distinction and importance, and that its many thousands of exhibitor friends are a source of pride.

As a service to the subscribers of this paper, I should like to present some of the facts concerning the record Columbia has made for itself in recent years.

But, first, I should like to set down the outstanding films Columbia promises to deliver during the current sales drive, which covers the fifteen week period from March 16 to June 28. They are: "Counter-Attack," with Paul Muni; "Over 21," with Irene Dunne; "A Thousand and One Nights," with Cornel Wilde; and "The Fighting Guardsman."

Let us now go back to Columbia's 1943-44 sales campaign, which was known as "Dates to Win." Here is what Columbia promised and what it failed to deliver. Promised for delivery during the period covered by the drive were "Cover Girl," "Curly" (released as "Once Upon a Time"), "Address Unknown," "Pilebuck" (released as "Secret Command"), "Mr. Winkle Goes to War," "Road to Yesterday" (released as "Together Again"), "Tonight and Every Night," with Rita Hayworth, and a Kay Kyser musical ("Carolina Blues"). Columbia failed to deliver during the campaign period "Secret Command," "Mr. Winkle Goes to War," and "Carolina Blues," but it did deliver these pictures later on in the season. In addition, it failed to deliver "Together Again" and "Tonight and Every Night," the two most important productions it promised, and, as you all know, it withheld these pictures from the 1943-44 contract-holders and placed them on the 1944-45 program. Thus we find that out of eight top productions promised for delivery during the "Dates to Win" campaign, only three were delivered within the specified time, three at later dates, and two withheld. (Incidentally, such pictures as "Cover Girl," "What a Woman," and "Sahara," which were delivered during 1943-44, were withheld from the 1942-43 contract-holders.)

Let us now take up Columbia's record of performances for the current season up to the present time: Most of you will recall that, when Columbia announced its program for 1944-45, it changed its method of approach; that is, instead of making definite promises as to what pictures it would deliver, it listed its roster of players and story properties, and stated that its "program for 1944-45 will be selected from such personalities and material as are hereby listed, or from additional material acquired and produced during the year."

In explaining this new method of approach, Columbia stated in the announcement that "the presentation is made in

this form at this time in order that the company may remain elastic in its thinking, may make such changes as it believes to be in the best interests of an improved program, and consequently, in the best interests of the theatres served."

Let us take a look at how this "elastic thinking" has worked out up to the present time. The only positive promises Columbia made for its 1944-45 season were that it would produce 44 features (exclusive of westerns and shorts), and that twenty of these forty-four would be top-bracket films. The announcement called these twenty top-bracket pictures "the greatest number ever offered in a single year by Columbia . . . with a corresponding reduction in the number of B pictures."

Thus far, Columbia has set for release a total of twenty-six pictures. These are the following:

6002	Tonight and Every Night.....	Feb. 22
6003	Together Again .....	Dec. 22
6014	Eadie Was a Lady.....	Jan. 23
6016	Strange Affair .....	Oct. 8
6017	Crime Doctor's Courage.....	Feb. 27
6018	Rough, Tough and Ready.....	Mar. 22
6019	Leave It to Blondie.....	Feb. 22
6021	Shadows in the Night.....	Oct. 19
6022	The Mark of the Whistler.....	Nov. 2
6023	The Power of the Whistler.....	Apr. 19
6024	I Love a Mystery.....	Jan. 25
6025	Tahiti Nights .....	Dec. 28
6026	Eve Knew Her Apples.....	Apr. 12
6028	Meet Miss Bobby Socks.....	Oct. 12
6032	She's a Sweetheart.....	Dec. 7
6033	Sergeant Mike .....	Nov. 9
6034	A Guy, a Gal, and a Pal.....	Oct. 26
6037	Escape in the Fog.....	Apr. 5
6038	Dancing in Manhattan.....	Dec. 14
6039	Let's Go Steady.....	Jan. 4
6040	The Missing Juror.....	Nov. 16
6041	Youth on Trial.....	Jan. 11
	Counter-Attack .....	Apr. 26
	Boston Blackie Booked on Suspicion.....	May 10
	The Fighting Guardsman .....	May 24

With twenty-six features released or already set for release, there still remain eighteen pictures to complete the forty-four promised for the season.

As said, Columbia has promised twenty top-bracket pictures. If you will examine the preceding release schedule, you will notice that only seven productions have been so far allocated to the top bracket of twenty. Of these, "Tonight and Every Night" and "Together Again" have been allocated rightly. The other five, "Eadie was a Lady," "Strange Affair," "Crime Doctor's Courage," "Rough, Tough, and Ready," and "Leave It to Blondie," are strictly program pictures,—not one of them is good enough to top a double bill. Yet we find them as part of the top bracket of twenty. Now, what will be the thirteen pictures still needed to round out the top twenty?

(Continued on last page)

### **"The Affairs of Susan" with Joan Fontaine and George Brent**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 109 min.)

Audiences should enjoy many hearty laughs in this comedy-farce. The story is thin, but good direction and the zestful acting of the players make it highly entertaining. Despite some slow stretches in the action, it holds one's attention well, has witty dialogue, and maintains a note of high comedy from beginning to end. Joan Fontaine is particularly good as a comedienne. As the vivacious young woman with whom four men fall in love, she portrays three distinctive personalities—an honest, naive woman; a frivolous, sophisticated play-girl; and an intellectual, unemotional woman, each personality depending on the temperament of the man with whom she was romancing at the time. These romances are the cause for much laughter, particularly because one of the suitors is her former husband. Since one cannot guess which one of the suitors she will finally marry, one is held in suspense right to the end. The production values are good, and the clothes Miss Fontaine wears should delight women patrons.

In the development of the story, Walter Abel, a conservative Government official, falls in love with Joan, who accepts his proposal of marriage. When he learns that she had been divorced from George Brent, a Broadway producer, and that she had been engaged to Dennis O'Keefe, a serious author, and Don DeFore, a wealthy lumberman, Abel determines to find out the truth about his bride-to-be. He invites the three men to dinner and asks them to relate their experiences with Joan. In a series of flashbacks it is shown how Brent met Joan on a remote island off the New England coast. Her beauty and unworldliness had so intrigued him that he had made her a great stage star and had married her. But her inherent honesty and inability to lie had embarrassed him so often that it eventually led to their divorce. When she returned from Reno, she had met DeFore in Brent's office and, by deliberately behaving as a gay, glamorous woman, and by lying shamelessly, had induced him to back one of Brent's plays. Her bold actions, however, had proved too much for DeFore, causing him to break their engagement. She next met O'Keefe on a park bench, and had become so intrigued by his serious writings that she took to wearing mannish clothes and assumed an intellectual air. But this romance soon came to an abrupt end when, after deliberately getting O'Keefe drunk to trick him into marrying her, her innate honesty had triumphed and she had let him alone. Their stories told, all three men realize their love for Joan and, with Abel following closely, make a dash for her apartment, where each pleads his case. Brent emerges victorious.

Thomas Monroe, Laszlo Gorog, and Richard Flournoy wrote the screen play, Hal B. Wallis produced it, and William Seiter directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"G.I. Honeymoon" with Gale Storm and Peter Cookson**

(Monogram, March 9; time, 70 min.)

A fairly entertaining program comedy-farce; it is nonsensical and occasionally suggestive, but it is not offensive. The story deals with the frustrations of a soldier and his bride who, because of military orders and other incidents, find themselves unable to con-

summate their marriage. Basically, the story idea is good, but it has been given a weak script and mediocre direction. The comedy is quite funny in spots, but much of it is pretty dull because of the obviously contrived, trite farcical situations; yet they are of the sort that will probably draw hearty laughter from indiscriminating patrons. The pace is fast:—

Just as Gale Storm and Lieut. Peter Cookson are married, he receives orders to report for duty immediately. Gale follows him and, on the train, flirts with Jerome Cowan, a gambler, and tricks him into exchanging his drawing room for her upper berth. Her desire to be alone with her husband is frustrated when he is ordered to stand guard duty on the train all night. Arriving at their destination, Gale, through a series of coincidents, rents an apartment from Cowan, unaware that the building had been declared out of bounds by the army because he operated a gambling establishment. Gale unwittingly arranges a reception for her husband's fellow officers and his commanding Colonel, but, prior to their arrival, a group of soldiers come to the apartment in the belief that it was a gambling "joint." Gale, mistaking them for her husband's guests, entertains them. She realizes the truth when the officers and their wives begin to arrive, and manages to hide the soldiers in different parts of the apartment. Meanwhile Cowan, seeking revenge on Gale for tricking him on the train, notifies the military police that her apartment was filled with "brass hats," who were out of bounds. With the arrival of the police, Cookson's irate Colonel orders his arrest. It all turns out for the best when Gale's aunt, arriving for a visit, proves to be an old girl-friend of the Colonel, and persuades him to release Cookson. Given a forty-eight hour pass for a belated honeymoon, Cookson finds himself frustrated once again when an announcement comes over the radio cancelling all leaves.

Richard Weil, Jr., wrote the screen play, Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Phil Karlstein directed it. The cast includes Arline Judge, Frank Jenks and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Power of the Whistler" with Richard Dix**

(Columbia, April 19; time, 67 min.)

This third in the "Whistler" series of program psychological murder melodramas is decidedly inferior to the other two pictures. It lacks the suspense that was so predominant in the first two pictures, which were directed expertly by William Castle, and the story is so confusing and so illogical that one loses interest in the outcome. Moreover, it is unpleasant, for the leading character is a homicidal maniac whose actions throughout are far from pleasurable. Particularly distasteful are the closing scenes in which the heroine, to save herself, kills the maniac by stabbing him in the throat with a pitchfork. Although this killing is done in self-defense, one cannot escape the feeling that it is coldblooded. There is no comedy relief:—

Richard Dix, an escaped maniac from a mental institution, suffers a temporary loss of memory when he is accidentally struck by a car. He wanders into a cafe, where Janis Carter, without his knowledge, tells his fortune with a deck of cards. The cards foretell death for him within twenty-four hours, and Janis warns



him of his danger. When he tells her that he had just suffered a loss of memory, Janis offers to help him. Through different papers found on his person, Janis institutes an unsuccessful investigation to learn his identity. She arranges to have him spend the night at her apartment, and persuades her sister (Jeff Donnell) to help check a few more of the clues to his identity. On the following morning, Dix recovers his memory but does not mention it to Janis; he planned to use her in a scheme to murder the chief warden of the institution from which he had escaped. Pretending a partial recovery of his memory, Dix persuades Janis to accompany him to the town where the warden lived. Meanwhile Jeff, following up the clues to Dix's identity, discovers who he really is and learns of his scheme to murder the warden. She notifies the police and spurs them into action. Shortly after, Dix, driving an automobile to the warden's home, is stopped by the police. He lies his way out of the situation, arousing Janis' suspicion. When she questions him, he reveals his identity and reaches for a knife to kill her lest she foil his plans. She manages to wrench herself free, and flees for her life, Dix in pursuit. She reaches a barn and hides in the hay loft, but Dix, still wielding the knife, climbs up after her. To save herself, she picks up a pitchfork and stabs him to death.

Aubrey Wisberg wrote the screen play, Leonard S. Picker produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

Too morbid for children.

### **"Eve Knew Her Apples" with Ann Miller and William Wright**

(Columbia, April 12; time, 64 min.)

Just a moderately amusing program comedy. It has a few good comedy situations, but for the most part it is silly and may prove tiresome. An attempt has been made by the producers to imitate "It Happened One Night," but the results are feeble. There are no novel twists in the plot; it unfolds in just the manner one expects. Ann Miller sings a few songs of the popular variety, which come as a welcome relief from the story's tediousness. She does not, however, do any dancing; this is unfortunate, for had she danced it would have undoubtedly bolstered the entertainment values:—

Ann Miller, a singing radio star, is followed to a summer resort by Ray Walker, her manager, who objected to her taking a vacation; he wanted her to continue working and to sign a motion picture contract. To escape Walker, Ann hides in an old automobile owned by William Wright, a reporter. Shortly after, Wright's car is stopped by the police, who were searching for an escaped murderess. Later, when Wright discovers Ann, he believes her to be the murderess. He contacts his editor and promises a scoop. Meanwhile Walker and John Eldredge, Ann's wealthy fiance, had offered a \$5000 reward to the person finding her. Wright eventually learns of her identity and of her reasons for hiding out. Both fall in love and decide to marry. Wright leaves her at a farm and goes to his newspaper office, where he files a story about his forthcoming marriage to her. While he is gone, a farmer discovers Ann and reports her whereabouts to her fiance, who drives out and picks her up. Believing that Wright had deserted her, and that he had revealed her presence on the farm to collect the reward money, Ann determines to marry Eldredge immediately. Wright, learning that she had been

found, and that she planned to marry Eldredge, assumes that she had played him for a fool. Angered, he notifies Walker that he was coming to his office to put in a claim for money. Ann becomes even more infuriated when she learns of this, but when Wright claims only \$35 for expenses incurred while aiding her, Ann realizes the truth and reunites with him.

E. Edwin Moran wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Will Jason directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Corn Is Green" with Bette Davis and John Dall**

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 114 min.)

An excellent dramatic entertainment, finely produced. It is a good combination of a human interest story and skillful characterizations, with intelligent and sensitive direction. Its appeal, however, will be mainly to high class audiences; as far as the masses are concerned, although there is human interest in the story, it is too wordy, and since there is little action, many patrons may become fidgety. Moreover, the atmosphere is heavy and there is little comedy relief. Bette Davis does artistic work as the middle-aged London schoolteacher, who comes to a poor Welsh mining town with a determination to bring the benefits of education to illiterate boys. She is at all times a sympathetic character, because of her self-sacrificing efforts to help the underprivileged. It is a drama of courage and faith, with many situations that will stir the emotions. Although its chief appeal will be to the classes, Bette Davis' popularity, and the fact that the story had been adapted from a famous stage play, should help to draw the rank and file:—

Arriving in the mining town to take up residence in a house she had recently inherited, Miss Davis is appalled by the ignorance and poverty of the inhabitants, who sent their twelve-year-old children to work in the mines. She launches an educational program to stamp out illiteracy, but her efforts are sabotaged by the local squire (Nigel Bruce), who feared that educated youngsters would be to his economic disadvantage. Undaunted, Miss Davis turns her home into a school and employs, at her own expense, two assistant teachers. When she discovers among her pupils John Dall, a gifted young miner, she determines to make something of him in the hope that he will one day lead his people. In two years, Dall progresses so rapidly that Miss Davis prepares him for an Oxford scholarship. But the boy, rebelling against her constant driving, gets drunk one evening and has an affair with Joan Lorrington, disreputable daughter of Miss Davis' cockney housekeeper. Months later, when Miss Davis learns of Joan's pregnancy, she bribes the girl to keep the news from Dall lest it interfere with his examinations. Dall wins the scholarship, but, when he learns that Joan had borne his illegitimate son, he insists upon marrying her and returning to the mines. Violently opposed to his giving up his brilliant future to live with Joan, who neither loved Dall nor wanted the child, Miss Davis solves the problem by adopting the baby. Grateful, Dall goes on to Oxford.

Casey Robinson and Frank Cavett wrote the screen play, Jack Chertok produced it, and Irving Rapper directed it. The cast includes Rhys Williams, Rosalind Ivan, Mildred Dunnock and others.

Adult entertainment.

Assuming that Columbia will deliver "Over 21," "The Fighting Guardsman," "Counter-Attack," and "A Thousand and One Nights," the four top bracket pictures promised for delivery during the current sales drive, and assuming also that they will be placed in the top brackets, there will be left nine pictures to complete the top bracket twenty.

Let us see what Columbia has to offer from among its properties, and which of these properties are in production, so that we may contemplate delivery this season.

From the information that I have been able to gather, the following pictures have been completed but have not yet been set for release: "Ten Cents a Dance," "Blonde from Brooklyn," and "Surprise in the Night." All three are of program grade. The only picture now in production (other than "Over 21") is "Kiss and Tell"; but whether this top picture will be delivered to the 1944-45 contract-holders depends on how "elastic" Columbia remains in its thinking. Columbia has announced plans for the production of "Some Call It Love," starring Rosalind Russell, but shooting has not yet been started. Nor has anything been done about such properties as "Jacobowsky and the Colonel," "Burlesque," "April Showers," or "Chatauqua." All these were among the outstanding properties from which Columbia stated it would select its 1944-45 program. When Columbia announces its 1945-46 program within the next few months, this writer will not be surprised to find these properties listed among those of the new season; it is an old Columbia practice to remove properties from one season and dangle them as bait for prospective new-season customers.

Thus we find that "Kiss and Tell" is the only top-bracket picture now in production, but since Columbia has made no announcement that it will release it this season, HARRISON'S REPORTS ventures to say that, on the basis of Columbia's past performances, it will probably be withheld from the 1944-45 contract-holders, and offered for delivery in the 1945-46 season. And if "Kiss and Tell" should turn out to be an outstanding production, there is a possibility that Columbia will give it the "Song to Remember" treatment; that is, sell the picture separate and apart from any program, taking it away from such exhibitors as are entitled to it.

Since there are no other top-bracket pictures in production, and since those that are already completed are strictly of program grade, the question of what pictures will eventually be allocated to complete the top bracket of twenty is indeed pertinent. It is so pertinent, in fact, that Columbia owes it to its "thousands of exhibitor friends" to furnish an answer. And unless such an answer is given, every exhibitor has the right to ask whether Columbia will pursue the tactics it employed in previous years, and is still employing in the current season—that of allocating pictures of lesser value to the high film rental brackets, subjecting the exhibitors to loss of revenue.

Examine the release schedule once more to see the type of pictures that have been given allocation numbers 6014, 6016, 6017, 6018, and 6019: not one is worthy of topping a double bill; yet they comprise part of the top twenty.

Other than "Tonight and Every Night" and "Together Again," the quality of Columbia's product thus far this season has been mediocre, with the exception of one or two program pictures, which were no more than fair. But, in fairness, it should be said that the majority of the product has been no worse than that of some of the other companies.

Here is again an opportunity for Columbia to redeem itself in the eyes of the exhibitors, and really to pay a tribute to Abe Montague, its general sales manager, in whose honor the current sales drive has been named. With but a few more months left of the 1944-45 season, Columbia should have a pretty good idea of what productions it hopes to have completed, and to which brackets it intends to allocate these pictures. It should make clear its intentions to its customers, and, if the product that will be available is not of the quality

that will justify allocation in the higher brackets, it should honestly offer to make proper adjustments. Once Columbia makes up its mind to stop playing the game of "cat and mouse," I have no doubt that the independent exhibitors will give it their full support. But until Columbia learns to deal in a forthright manner, no exhibitor can be blamed for being wary about making a deal with its representatives.

Columbia's past has been so inglorious that it would require many more columns to give you all the facts. I have repeatedly called the attention of these injustices to the Columbia executives with the hope that they would reform, treating the exhibitors in a fair way, but I have not succeeded. And I have grown tired of dealing with their injustices in these columns so frequently. But regardless of my personal feelings, I believe that these are facts that you are entitled to know, for it is thus that you can protect your interests.

### ARE THE LUSH TIMES OVER?

A drop of \$7,000,000 in theatre admission tax collections in December as compared with the collections in November, as disclosed by the Internal Revenue Department, is indicative of the condition that many exhibitors have long been proclaiming—that the increased receipts were due, not to increased attendance, but to the increase in the price of admissions.

Though when the new admission tax schedules were put into effect the tax collections almost doubled up, many exhibitor leaders felt that the receipts would eventually suffer because of the new tax rates. They had the same effect as if the prices of admission themselves were increased, for the public does not, as a rule, stop to analyze where the increase goes; the picture patron knows only one thing—he is asked to pay more.

If the drop in admission tax revenue continues, the exhibitor organizations should at once plan a campaign to call this condition to the attention of Congress, with the object in view of inducing it to reduce the taxes to where they were last April. The exhibitors should tell their Congressmen that the effect of the increased taxes was to reduce the theatre receipts without benefitting the Government. Even if the tax receipts should not drop to exactly what they were before the new rates went into effect, Congress should be told that the difference is more than offset by the loss of revenue from personal income taxes. In other words, though the revenue from amusement admissions may remain slightly higher than it was before the new rates went into effect, the portion that the Government will receive will in the long run be smaller because the owners of the amusement places, hit by a reduction in theatre receipts, will pay less income tax.

### THE HONEYMOON IS OVER

The growing print shortage, the approaching end of the European war, and the need for a more flexible position in order to liquidate their 250 million dollars worth of stored films, is the No. 1 problem of the distributors, states a recent bulletin of the ITO of Northern California.

"They (the distributors)," continues the bulletin, "won't admit that the honeymoon is over, but exhibitors know it and unless they curb their film rentals to conform with the shrinking grosses they will be behind the 8-ball. Shrinking grosses will mean shrinking film rentals and the producers will get less revenue for pictures produced at a greater cost. This time it will not do them any good to cry 'we have to have more money for these pictures because they cost us so much.' Remember when they cried, 'We must have more money because we have lost all our foreign trade.' The exhibitors were suckers once but will not be again. With a live and let live program they would not have been caught with a large inventory."



Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

# HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....\$15.00  
U. S. Insular Possessions. 16.50  
Canada ..... 16.50  
Mexico, Cuba, Spain..... 16.50  
Great Britain ..... 15.75  
Australia, New Zealand,  
India, Europe, Asia .... 17.50  
35c a Copy

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Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 1945

No. 14

## An Opportunity for the War Activities Committee

Numerous letters from exhibitors all over the country have been reaching my desk commenting on the editorial, "Public Relations and the War Activities Committee," which appeared in the March 24 issue of this paper. Typical of the comments made is the following letter from Mr. R. W. Wood, president of the Circle Theatre Company, in Portland, Oregon:

"I have just read your article in the issue of March 24 on 'Public Relations and the WAC,' and how true it is!

"It seems rather strange that after all the efforts we and the other theatres throughout the nation have given to the progress of the war that the theatres should be treated as joints.

"As you probably know we have had a policy of being open until 4 A.M., each day for the past 26 years. With the senseless curfew it has affected business here 30%, which also affects bond buying and reduces tax money to the Federal Treasury in no small degree.

"We have taken part in all the Government drives from the very start.

"You probably know you have left one important item out of your list of five mentioned, that last year, throughout the nation over 17,000 free movie days were given in support of bond drives—the theatres paying all expenses.

"Your article hit the nail on the head and I hope it may have some effect on those who know nothing about conditions out here on the Coast, where we don't use coal and have no manpower shortage."

Mr. Wood raises a sound argument when he says that "the senseless curfew . . . affects bond buying and reduces tax money to the Federal Treasury." As a matter of fact, it is one of the strongest arguments the War Activities Committee could use in an effort to induce the Government to rescind the curfew order insofar as it affects the nation's motion picture theatres. Thousands of these theatres sell bonds during, not only the loan drives, but also every other day in the year. Because of the convenience, many persons have bought their bonds at theatres only. But a large part of them, now that the theatres' box-offices close too early to suit their time of leisure, neither attend the theatres nor buy bonds. Thus the Government loses out in three ways—bond sales, admission taxes, and income taxes from theatre operations.

The other exhibitors who have written me, as well as Mr. Wood, make particular mention of the fact that the Government seemingly lacks consideration of the work the motion picture theatres have done and still are doing for the war effort.

The fault lies, not with the Government, but with the industry's War Activities Committee, which, as it has already been said in these columns, is the ideal agency for the handling of the industry's public relations during war-time, since its members represent every branch of the industry. Unfortunately, the WAC has not functioned as a truly representative body; its affairs have been run by a small clique, which has usurped the powers of the different committees that make up the organization. Though the mem-

bers of these committees represent many industry organizations, they are, in reality, mere window-dressing. On more than one occasion has it been brought to my attention that many members of these committees were neither consulted nor advised in regard to matters that affected the industry as a whole. The decisions were made privately by the ruling clique, Brandt, Fabian, Harmon.

If something is to be done about the curfew, or about any other Government ruling, for that matter, the plan of procedure should not be decided by a handful of men. Consider, for instance, the case of Mr. Woods' Circle Theatre, in Portland. In his particular territory there is neither a shortage of coal nor of manpower. Why, then, should Mr. Wood be made to close his theatre at midnight? In other territories similar conditions may exist, causing exhibitors to undergo unnecessary hardships as a result of a blanket ruling by the Government. How can a handful of men, unfamiliar with conditions in film territories other than their own—conditions such as are described by Mr. Wood, take it upon themselves to act for the exhibitors of those territories? By proper representation, it may be possible to induce the Government to relax its rulings in areas where there is an absence of the conditions that brought on the rulings. And no fair-minded exhibitor in a "stricken" area would object to such a procedure, since the imposition of unnecessary hardships on his fellow-exhibitors will not alleviate his own hardships.

The solution of the public relations problem will come about only when the War Activities Committee makes up its mind to act as a body, and to enlist the support and influence of every exhibitor to induce the Government to modify rulings that work a hardship on the business without in any way helping the war effort.

Here is a chance for the War Activities Committee to drop politics and to render a real service to the motion picture industry as a whole.

\* \* \*

From Martin Smith, president of National Allied:

"I have just finished reading your editorial 'Public Relations and the War Activities Committee' as it appeared in your Reports of March 24th.

"Please accept my heartiest congratulations on not only grasping the significance of the situation but also in carrying your views in the Reports."

From Sidney E. Samuelson, general manager of the Allied Independent Theatre Owners of Eastern Pennsylvania:

"Compliments and congratulations on your splendid, fearless editorial on 'Public Relations and the War Activities Committee.'"

"Is it too much to hope that some one of the so-called big executives of the industry will heed your warning and take action, thereby preventing untold future grief? I hope so, but I doubt it."

Lack of space prevents my reproducing other such letters, from independent exhibitors, but the preceding two should give you a clear idea of how they feel about this question.

### "The Silver Fleet" with Ralph Richardson and Googie Withers

(PRC, June 15; time, 77 min.)

Good program fare. Based on the underground resistance theme, this British-made melodrama ranks with the better pictures of its type. The story, which has its locale in Holland, is intriguing and, without resorting to sensational melodramatics, the action maintains a steady undercurrent of excitement and suspense from start to finish, owing to the constant danger to the hero, who pretends collaboration with the Nazis in order to gain their confidence. The plot differs from the usual story of its type in that the hero aids his fellow-patriots to commit acts of sabotage without revealing his identity, even permitting them, as well as his wife, to think of him as a "Quisling." The acting of the entire cast, particularly Ralph Richardson, is impressive:—

Richardson, head of a Dutch shipbuilding yard, is "requested" by the Nazis to continue its management when they occupy Holland. Sensing an opportunity to be of service to his country, Richardson feigns collaboration with the Nazis, winning their confidence. He uses his position to gain valuable information about trial runs on a completed submarine and, without revealing his identity, sends instructions to a group of Dutch patriots, enabling them to overpower the Nazi crew and to sail the submarine to England. Meanwhile the unsuspecting patriots, as well as his wife (Googie Withers), treats him as a "Quisling." But he does not reveal to them his true work lest one of them unwittingly interfere with his sabotage plans. Upon completion of the second submarine, Richardson finds that its sabotage presents a difficult problem because of the Nazis' refusal to allow a Dutchman on board during the trial runs. Cleverly playing his hand, Richardson, as a reward for his cooperation, secures an invitation to accompany a party of important Nazi officials on the trials. All, including Richardson, lose their lives when the submarine submerges and, through mechanism installed secretly by Richardson, explodes. At home, Richardson's diary reveals to his wife his great courage and sacrifice.

Vernon C. Sewell and Gordon Wellesley wrote the screen play and directed it. Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger produced it. The cast includes Esmond Knight, Beresford Egan and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### "The Phantom of 42nd Street" with Dave O'Brien and Kay Aldridge

(PRC, May 2; time, 58 min.)

Just moderately interesting program fare. It is a murder mystery melodrama, with comedy, differing little in quality from the usual run of such low-budgeted pictures. The story is somewhat trite, and its treatment is so routine that one finds his interest in the proceedings lagging. It may, however, prove acceptable to the ardent, indiscriminating followers of this type of entertainment, for some of the situations are suspenseful. Frank Jenks, as a taxi driver, handles most of the comedy, but little of it is effective. In general, the acting is unimpressive:—

Dave O'Brien, a dramatic critic covering the theatrical debut of Kay Aldridge, daughter of Alan Mowbray, a noted actor, neglects to telephone his editor when Mowbray's millionaire brother is murdered mysteriously during the intermission. Scoffed at by the editor, O'Brien determines to prove that he is a good newspaperman by solving the crime. He becomes friendly with Kay and learns from her that she was worried about her father's safety, because a strange woman had been lurking near her home. The murder of a watchman who had worked with Mowbray twenty-five years previously convinces O'Brien that Mowbray's old Repertory Company held the solution to the crimes. He investigates the woman (Edythe Elliott) who had been lurking

about Mowbray's home and discovers that she was Kay's mother, whom the girl thought was dead. He learns from Miss Elliott that, as the Repertory Company's ingenue, she had loved Stanley Price, an actor, but had married Mowbray when Price disappeared. Mowbray's murdered brother, too, wanted to marry her. After Kay's birth, she had divorced Mowbray to marry Price. Eventually, she divorced Price, and the last she heard of him was that he had died in an asylum. The murder of another former member of the Repertory Company, as well as a few attempts on his own life, spur O'Brien into action. With the cooperation of the police and Mowbray, he arranges for a benefit performance of Julius Caesar, in order that Mowbray, as Caesar, could be used as a target by the murderer during the part when Brutus stabs him. The scheme proves successful, enabling O'Brien to uncover the theatre's stage manager as the killer, who turns out to be Price in disguise. O'Brien proves that Price sought revenge on Mowbray's entire family, because he felt they were responsible for his broken marriage to Miss Elliott.

Milton Raison wrote the screen play, and Albert Herman directed it. Mr. Herman and Martin Mooney were the associate producers. The cast includes Jack Mulhall and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### "Two O'Clock Courage" with Tom Conway and Ann Rutherford

(RKO, no release date set; time, 66 min.)

A fairly good program murder mystery melodrama. The story is neither novel nor logical, but it holds one's attention well and keeps one guessing as to the murderer's identity. Since the hero is an amnesia victim, who learns that he had been involved in the murder but does not know if he had committed the crime, the interest is heightened by his efforts to establish his identity and to solve the murder. It has effective comedy, too, with most of the laughter provoked by Richard Lane, as an over-zealous reporter, who constantly finds himself in trouble with his editor; every time he reports a solution to the crime, a new development upsets his story:—

Suffering a loss of memory because of a blow on the head, Tom Conway is found staggering on the street by Ann Rutherford, a girl taxi driver. She tends to his wound and offers to help him find out who he is. On their way to a police station, they hear a newsboy shouting about the murder of a local theatrical producer and, to their horror, find that Conway fitted the description of the dead man's chauffeur, who was suspected of the crime. Ann, refusing to believe him guilty, offers to help him investigate. They visit the chauffeur's rooming house, where the landlady, greeting Conway as a stranger, satisfies him that he was not the missing man. Following the clue of a matchbook found in his pocket, Conway goes to a fashionable nightclub, where he is recognized by Jean Brooks, an actress; Lester Matthews, a playwright; and Roland Drew, Jean's wealthy fiance. By adroit questioning, Conway learns his name and discovers that he had quarreled with the producer on the night of the murder about a play written by a friend. He enters the dead man's home to search for the script only to be knocked unconscious by an unseen assailant. The blow restores his memory, and he recalls that he had accused the producer and Matthews of stealing his friend's play. Subsequent events lead Conway to suspect Matthews of the crime, but the mystery is cleared up when Jean kills the playwright. She confesses that she had murdered the producer because he threatened to reveal their love affair to her fiance, and that she had killed Matthews because he, too, knew of her past. His innocence proved, Conway marries Ann.

Robert E. Kent wrote the screen play, Ben Stoloff produced it, and Anthony Mann directed it. The cast includes Bette Jane Greer, Emory Parnell and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



### **"China's Little Devils" with Harry Carey and Paul Kelly**

(Monogram, April 27; time, 74 min.)

This fanciful war melodrama may get by as a supporting feature in secondary houses, but as entertainment it will appeal chiefly to the juvenile trade; adults may find it all too far-fetched. The action revolves mainly around a small band of Chinese refugee children, who commit totally unbelievable acts of sabotage against the Jap military in occupied China, effect miraculous rescues of prisoners with the greatest of ease, and in other ways make complete monkeys of the Japs, even when it comes to battling it out with firearms. The Chinese youngsters are appealing and their performances are good, but one cannot help feeling as though he were watching a school play. Not much can be said for the direction:—

Paul Kelly, a Flying Tiger, lands his plane in the ruins of a Chinese village, where he finds Ducky L. Louie, a Chinese boy, wounded and orphaned by the war. The Flying Tigers adopt the boy and teach him commando tactics. But a few years later they decide that he needs an education, and they send him to a missionary school operated under the neutral American flag by Harry Carey, a kindly doctor. There, Ducky organizes and trains the other refugee children in commando tactics and, despite Carey's pleas, they steal out at night to prey on the Japanese. During one of their exploits, two of the youngsters are taken prisoners while blowing up a supply base. Carey pleads with the Japanese commandant to release the lads, only to be told that he himself was now a prisoner, because Japan had just declared war against the United States. Through a scheme devised by Ducky, the doctor is rescued by the children and taken to the hills. A few days later, Kelly's plane crashes in the vicinity and he is taken prisoner by the Japs. The youngsters, however, through Ducky's ingenuity, rescue him. After treating Kelly's wounds, they take him to a river to help him get back to the Chinese lines. A Japanese patrol converges on them in an effort to capture Kelly, but the children and Carey help him to escape, sacrificing their lives as they shoot it out with the Japs.

William Hanley and Grant Withers wrote the screen play and produced it, and Monta Bell directed it. The cast includes Philip Ahn, Richard Loo and others.

### **"The Scarlet Clue" with Sidney Toler and Manton Moreland**

(Monogram, April 20; time, 64 min.)

While this may appeal to the followers of the "Charlie Chan" murder mystery melodramas, it is not up to the standard of the other pictures in the series, in that the action is slow and the mystery of the murders is not as absorbing. Moreover, most of the acting is stilted and, since the outcome is obvious, it holds the spectator in just fair suspense. The comedy, with the exception of a very amusing bit between Manton Moreland and Ben Carter, is not impressive. On the whole, the picture leaves one with the feeling that the producers are having a difficult time finding story material with which to continue the series:—

While investigating a spy plot to steal secret radar plans, Government Agent Charlie Chan (Sidney Toler) learns that the head of the spy ring was unknown even to his confederates. Chan traces the murder of one of the spies to Helen Devereaux, a radio actress, with whom the murdered man had been out on a date. Virginia Brissac, sponsor of Helen's radio show, openly resented Chan's interference with rehearsals in order to carry on his investigation. Shortly after, Janet Shaw, another actress, is killed by a mysterious gas in a crowded studio. Unknown to Chan, Janet had discovered that the station's manager (I. Stanford Jolley) was a spy, and she had tried to blackmail him. Later, when Chan's suspicions fall on Jolley, the mysterious spy leader lures him to his death by springing a trap door in an elevator. To snare

the leader, Chan leaves the safe in a radar laboratory unguarded. Subsequent events lead to the murder of Jack Norton, another radio actor, and help Chan to discover that the murders were caused by an ingenious device that had been hidden in the studio microphones and which emitted an invisible gas. As a result of this discovery, Chan, aided by Benson Fong, his son, and Manton Moreland, his chauffeur, is enabled to track down the spy leader, who turns out to be Miss Brissac, the radio sponsor. She falls into her own elevator death trap in an attempt to escape arrest.

George Callahan wrote the screen play, James S. Burkett produced it, and Phil Rosen directed it. The cast includes Robert Homans and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Identity Unknown" with Richard Arlen and Cheryl Walker**

(Republic, April 2; time, 71 min.)

A fine topical drama, well directed and capably acted. Revolving around a returning soldier, stricken with amnesia, who endeavors to establish his identity, the story is novel; has deep human interest, touches of sadness, and a pleasing romance. It has considerable suspense, too, for the action takes the soldier to four homes, in different parts of the country, and neither he nor the spectator knows which one of the families may welcome him as their own. The picture should appeal to most audiences because of the deep sympathy they will feel for the hero, who, despite his own bitter disappointments, understandingly gives aid and comfort to those who had lost loved ones. Richard Arlen, as the soldier, gives a very good account of himself, as do the other members of the cast:—

Suffering from a total loss of memory, Arlen, learns that his identity was unknown to the army, because, at the time he and four other soldiers were bombed in an isolated French farmhouse, his dog-tag had been blown off. He learns also that he was the sole survivor, and that four dog-tags had been found in the debris. His commandant (Ian Keith) felt sure that one of the tags bore his name and, pending an investigation, he hands Arlen a list of the names to mull over. Determined to identify himself, Arlen decides to visit the homes of his dead buddies, and goes A.W.O.L. from a troop train. He first stops at the home of Cheryl Walker, who lost her husband. He discovers immediately that he was not her husband. After he explains, Cheryl invites him to stay at her home for a few days. Both fall in love, and he leaves her with a determination to establish his identity; he wanted to marry her, but had to be sure that no other woman was waiting for him. His next stop is a home in West Virginia, where Bobby Driscoll, a six-year-old boy, welcomes him as "Daddy." But Arlen soon learns that the boy was mistaken, and he leaves for Chicago, the next stop. There, in a dingy saloon, he meets John Forrest, younger brother of one of the dead soldiers, who was involved with a gambling syndicate. Satisfied that he was not the boy's brother, Arlen, after helping the young man to rehabilitate himself, heads for the last address, an Iowa farm, confident that it must be his home. But when Arlen arrives there, he soon learns that the elderly farm couple (Sara Padden and Forrest Taylor) were not his folks. He helps the downcast couple to adjust their lives and, shortly after, as he drives to the railroad station to meet Cheryl, he is picked up by military police and taken back to camp. During his absence, the army had learned his identity and, through applied psychology, help him recollect that, in civilian life, he had been a college professor. His amnesia gone, Arlen joyfully reunites with Cheryl.

Richard Weil wrote the screen play, and Walter Colmes directed it. Mr. Colmes and Howard Bretherton were the associate producers. The cast includes Lola Lane, Harry Tyler, Roger Pryor and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Counter-Attack" with Paul Muni and Marguerite Chapman**

(Columbia, April 26; time, 90 min.)

Well directed and expertly acted, this is a tense war melodrama, suitable mostly for those who enjoy heavy dramatic entertainment. Most of the action takes place in the cellar of a collapsed building, where Paul Muni, a Russian paratrooper, finds himself trapped with a group of Nazi soldiers whom he disarms and holds at bay. Though slow-moving, the story is filled with considerable suspense as Muni, fighting weariness, engages in a battle of wits with his prisoners in an effort to secure vital information about German military movements. One is kept on edge throughout in the knowledge that the Germans will pounce upon Muni the moment sleep overcomes him. There is no comedy to relieve the tension, nor is there a romance:—

Preparatory to a counter-attack by Russian troops, a detachment of Soviet paratroopers, including Muni, are ordered to launch a surprise attack on a German garrison for the purpose of capturing a German officer so as to secure information about the enemy's plans. In the assault, the patrol is wiped out except for Larry Parks, Marguerite Chapman, a guerrilla fighter, and Muni, the last two becoming trapped in the cellar of a demolished building with eight Nazi soldiers. Muni cows the Germans with a machine gun, and manages to signal Parks, above the debris, sending him to the Russian lines for help. Although none of the Nazis wore an officer's uniform, Muni discovers evidence indicating that one was an officer but was hiding his identity. He questions each man relentlessly in an effort to identify the officer but they defiantly keep the information from him. The battle of wits resolves itself into an endurance contest, with the Germans waiting for an opportunity to overpower Muni the moment he drops from physical exhaustion. In an unguarded moment, the prisoners start a fight, wounding Marguerite, but Muni manages to subdue them. Then, by simulating the murder of two of the prisoners, he tricks the officer (Harro Meller) into identifying himself. Meller, feeling sure that German troops will eventually come to his rescue, proposes to Muni that they exchange military information. Muni agrees, obtaining vital information at the expense of revealing the Russian plans. It all turns out for the best, however, when Russian troops come to his rescue just as he collapses.

John Howard Lawson wrote the screen play, and Zoltan Korda directed it. The cast includes Phil Van Zandt, George Macready, Roman Bohnen and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Lady Confesses" with Mary Beth Hughes and Hugh Beaumont**

(PRC, May 16; time, 65 min.)

This murder mystery melodrama should prove acceptable program fare for non-discriminating followers of this type of entertainment. Although the story is commonplace and it lacks exciting action, it is sufficiently mystifying and has enough suspense to hold one's attention to a fair degree. The treatment follows the usual pattern of directing suspicion against several of the characters, with the guilty person emerging as the one least suspected. A few songs have been worked into the story without impeding the action:—

On the eve of her marriage to Hugh Beaumont, Mary Beth Hughes is confronted by Barbara Slater, Beaumont's wife, who had been missing for seven years. Barbara warns Mary that she will not permit the marriage. Mary's efforts to reach Beaumont are unavailing; intoxicated, he was asleep in the dressing room of Claudia Drake, singer in a night-club owned by Edmund MacDonald, a notorious character. Later that evening Barbara is found murdered in her apartment. Captain Emmett Vogan of the police questions both Mary and Beaumont. Mary establishes a satisfactory alibi, but Beaumont finds himself under suspicion when MacDonald, with whom he had spoken earlier

in the evening, denies that he had seen him, despite Claudia's statement that he had been in the club at the time of the murder. Suspicious of MacDonald, Mary secures employment in his nightclub in order to check on his movements. She overhears a quarrel between Claudia and MacDonald and, later, when Claudia is found murdered, she feels sure that MacDonald was responsible for both crimes. Finding a letter left by Claudia in her dressing room, addressed to Captain Vogan, Mary excitedly telephones Beaumont. He asks her to come up to his apartment immediately. Arriving there, Mary is horrified when Beaumont opens the letter in which Claudia accuses him of murdering Barbara and admits that she had furnished him with a false alibi. For the first time, Mary realizes that he was a homicidal maniac. Meanwhile Captain Vogan had discovered Beaumont's fingerprints at the scene of Claudia's murder. He hurries to Beaumont's apartment, arriving there in time to stop him from murdering Mary.

Helen Martin wrote the screen play, Alfred Stern produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Horn Blows at Midnight" with Jack Benny and Alexis Smith**

(Warner Bros., Apr. 28; time, 78 min.)

This fantastic comedy should go over pretty well with most audiences, for the story is novel and the plot developments amusing. As the angel who is sent down from Heaven to blow his horn at midnight and thus destroy the wicked Earth, Jack Benny is cast in a role that fits his particular brand of humor. The complications he gets himself into when he fails to complete his mission keep one chuckling throughout. At times the comedy reverts to slapstick in its broadest form, with several of the situations hilariously funny. The most comical of these are of the "Safety Last" variety in which Benny hangs precariously from a roof cornice and a flagpole high above a city street. These scenes should provoke uproarious laughter in crowded theatres. Although it is not a big picture, it has been given a pretty lavish production:—

Benny, a trumpet player in a symphony orchestra, falls asleep during a broadcast and dreams that he was an angel in Heaven. He is summoned to the office of the Chief (Guy Kibbee), who assigns him to the task of destroying the planet Earth because of its bad behaviour. The Chief instructs Benny to proceed to the Earth and, at the exact stroke of midnight, blow a golden trumpet. By this action, the Earth would be destroyed. Arriving on the Earth, Benny meets Allyn Joslyn and John Alexander, two fallen angels, who, because they had failed on a similar mission, had not been permitted to return to Heaven. Realizing the purpose of Benny's visit, the fallen angels plot to prevent his blowing the horn. As midnight approaches, Benny goes to the roof of a large hotel. Just at the stroke of midnight, Dolores Moran, a disillusioned cigarette girl, tries to commit suicide by throwing herself from the roof. Benny stops her, missing his chance to blow the horn. Crestfallen over his failure, Benny determines to make good on the following midnight. The fallen angels, delighted at his failure, enlist the aid of Reginald Gardiner, a suave crook, to steal Benny's trumpet. Meanwhile in heaven, Alexis Smith, Benny's girl-friend, secures permission to go down to the earth to investigate Benny's failure, arriving in the midst of Gardiner's efforts to steal the trumpet. She, too, becomes involved, and finally the Chief himself comes down to look into the matter. Benny eventually succeeds in recovering his trumpet only to be pushed off the roof when the others try to stop him from blowing it. As he falls to the street, he comes out of his dream.

Sam Hellman and James V. Kern wrote the screen play, Mark Hellinger produced it, and Raoul Walsh directed it. The cast includes Franklyn Pangborn, Mike Mazurki and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXVII

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 1945

No. 14

(Partial Index No. 2—Pages 26 to 52 Incl.)

Titles of Pictures	Reviewed on Page
Affairs of Susan, The—Paramount (109 min.)	50
Betrayal from the East—RKO (82 min.)	27
Body Snatcher, The—RKO (78 min.)	32
Brewster's Millions—United Artists (79 min.)	42
Bring on the Girls—Paramount (92 min.)	26
Circumstantial Evidence—20th Century-Fox (68 min.)	27
Cisco Kid Returns, The—Monogram (64 m.)	not reviewed
Clock, The—MGM (90 min.)	46
Colonel Blimp—United Artists (148 min.)	47
Corn is Green, The—Warner Bros. (114 min.)	51
Crime Doctor's Courage, The—Columbia (70 min.)	36
Crime, Inc.—PRC (75 min.)	28
Delightfully Dangerous—United Artists (93 min.)	34
Dillinger, John—Monogram (71 min.)	42
Docks of New York—Monogram (62 min.)	36
Earl Carroll Vanities—Republic (91 min.)	39
Enchanted Cottage, The—RKO (92 min.)	27
Enemy of the Law—PRC (56 m.)	not reviewed
Escape in the Fog—Columbia (63 min.)	42
Eve Knew Her Apples—Columbia (64 min.)	51
Fashion Model—Monogram (61 min.)	38
Fog Island—PRC (70 min.)	43
Frisco Sal—Universal (94 min.)	26
Gangsters' Den—PRC (55 m.)	not reviewed
God is My Co-Pilot—Warner Bros. (90 min.)	31
G.I. Honeymoon—Monogram (70 min.)	50
Having Wonderful Crime—RKO (70 min.)	26
Her Lucky Night—Universal (63 min.)	28
High Powered—Paramount (60 min.)	30
Hollywood and Vine—PRC (58 min.)	43
Hotel Berlin—Warner Bros. (98 min.)	34
House of Fear, The—Universal (68 min.)	46
It's A Pleasure—RKO (90 min.)	36
Keep Your Powder Dry—MGM (93 min.)	27
Man Who Walked Alone, The—PRC (73 min.)	47
Marked for Murder—PRC (58 m.)	not reviewed
Molly and Me—20th Century-Fox (76 min.)	38
Navajo Trail—Monogram (55 m.)	not reviewed
Pan-Americana—RKO (85 min.)	30
Picture of Dorian Gray, The—MGM (110 min.)	30
Power of the Whistler, The—Columbia (67 min.)	50
Rough Ridin' Justice—Columbia (58 m.)	not reviewed
Rough, Tough and Ready—Columbia (66½ min.)	38
Royal Scandal, A—20th Century-Fox (94 min.)	46
Salty O'Rourke—Paramount (97 min.)	31
See My Lawyer—Universal (67 min.)	30
Sheriff of Cimarron—Republic (55 m.)	not reviewed
She's a Sweetheart—Columbia (69 min.)	35
Song for Miss Julie, A—Republic (70 min.)	32
Spell of Amy Nugent, The—PRC (60 min.)	34
Strange Illusion—PRC (86 min.)	31
Stranger from Sante Fe—Monogram (53 m.)	not reviewed
Sudan—Universal (76 min.)	39
There Goes Kelly—Monogram (61 min.)	35
Unseen, The—Paramount (79 min.)	32
Utah—Republic (78 m.)	not reviewed
Without Love—MGM (111 min.)	47
Youth on Trial—Columbia (60 min.)	35

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

## Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

6039 Let's Go Steady—Parrish-Moran	Jan. 4
6041 Youth on Trial—Collins-Reed	Jan. 11
6014 Eadie Was a Lady—Miller-Besser	Jan. 18
6024 I Love a Mystery—Bannon-Foch	Jan. 25
6204 Sage Brush Heroes—Starrett (54 m.)	Feb. 1

6221 Sing Me a Song of Texas—Lane (66 m.)	Feb. 8
6002 Tonight and Every Night—Hayworth-Bowman	Feb. 22
6019 Leave it to Blondie—Lake-Singleton	Feb. 22
6017 Crime Doctor's Courage—Baxter-Crane	Feb. 27
6205 Rough Ridin' Justice—Starrett (58 m.)	Mar. 5
6034 A Guy, A Gal and a Pal—Hunter-Merrick	Mar. 8
6018 Rough, Tough and Ready—McLaglen-Morris	Mar. 22
6037 Escape in the Fog—Foch-Wright	Apr. 5
6026 Eve Knew Her Apples—Miller-Wright	Apr. 12
6222 Rockin' in the Rockies—Stooges-Hughes	Apr. 17
6023 Power of the Whistler—Dix-Carter	Apr. 19
Return of the Durango Kid—Starrett	Apr. 19
Counter-Attack—Muni-Chapman	Apr. 26
Boston Blackie Booked on Suspicion—Morris	May 10
The Fighting Guardsman—Parker-Louise	May 24
Special	
A Song to Remember—Muni-Oberon	Mar. 1

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

## Block 9

501 The Seventh Cross—Tracy-Gurie	September
502 Barbary Coast Gent—Beery	September
503 Waterloo Bridge—Taylor-Leigh (reissue)	September
504 Maisie Goes to Reno—Southern-Hodiak	September
505 Marriage is a Private Affair—Turner-Craig	October
506 Kismet—Dietrich-Colman	October
507 Mrs. Parkington—Pidgion-Garson	November
508 Naughty Marietta—MacDonald-Eddy (reissue)	November
510 An American Romance—Donlevy	November
509 Lost in a Harem—Abbott & Costello	December
Block 10	
513 The Thin Man Goes Home—Powell-Loy	January
514 Main Street After Dark—Arnold	January
515 Music for Millions—O'Brien-Allyson	February
516 Blonde Fever—Astor-Dorn	February
517 This Man's Navy—Beery-Drake	February
518 Between Two Women—Johnson-Barrymore	March
519 Nothing But Trouble—Laurel & Hardy	March
520 Keep Your Powder Dry—Peters-Turner-Day	March

## Specials

500 Dragon Seed—Hepburn-Huston	August
511 Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo—Tracy-Johnson	January
512 Meet Me in St. Louis—Garland-O'Brien	January
521 National Velvet—Rooney-Taylor	Not set

## Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

461 Song of the Range—Wakely (57 m.)	Dec. 1
421 Crazy Knights—Gilbert-Howard	Dec. 8
416 Shadow of Suspicion—Weaver-Cookson	Dec. 15
403 Alaska—Taylor-Lindsay	Dec. 22
409 Bowery Champs—East Side Kids	Dec. 29
414 Army Wives—Knox-Rambeau	Jan. 12
420 Adventures of Kitty O'Day—Parker-Cookson	Jan. 19
417 The Jade Mask—Sidney Toler	Jan. 26
422 There Goes Kelly—Moran-McKay (re.)	Feb. 24
410 Docks of New York—East Side Kids	Feb. 24
429 The Cisco Kid Returns—Renaldo (64 m.)	Mar. 27
423 Fashion Model—Lowery-Weaver	Mar. 29
401 Forever Yours—Storm-Brown (reset)	Apr. 1
406 G.I. Honeymoon—Storm-Cookson (re.)	Apr. 8
454 Gun Smoke—J. M. Brown (59 m.)	Not set
455 Navajo Trail—J. M. Brown (55 m.)	Not set
418 The Scarlet Clue—Sidney Toler	April 20
405 China's Little Devils—Carey-Kelley	April 27
456 Stranger from Sante Fe—J. M. Brown (53 m.)	Not set
402 Dillinger—Tierney-Lowe	Not set

**Paramount Features**

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

**Block 3**

- 4411 Here Come the Waves—Crosby-Hutton.....  
 4412 Dangerous Passage—Lowery-Brooks.....  
 4413 For Whom the Bell Tolls—Cooper-Bergman.....  
 4414 Practically Yours—Colbert-MacMurray.....  
 4415 Double Exposure—Morris-Kelly.....

**Block 4**

- 4416 Bring on the Girls—Tufts-Bracken-Lake.....  
 4417 The Unseen—McCrea-Russell.....  
 4418 Salty O'Rourke—Ladd-Russell.....  
 4419 High Powered—Lowery-Brooks.....

**Block 5**

- 4421 The Affairs of Susan—Fontaine-Brent.....  
 4422 Murder, He Says—MacMurray-Walker.....  
 4423 Scared Stiff—Haley-Savage.....  
 4424 A Medal for Benny—Lamour-DeCordova.....  
 Special  
 4432 Sign of the Cross—Reissue.....

**PRC Pictures, Inc. Features**

(625 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

- 514 Rogues' Gallery—Jenks-Raymond.....Dec. 6  
 556 Oath of Vengeance—Buster Crabbe (57 m.)...Dec. 9  
 501 The Town Went Wild—Lydon-Bartholomew.....Dec. 15  
 513 Castle of Crimes—English-made.....Dec. 22  
 553 The Whispering Skull—Texas Rangers (56m.)...Dec. 29  
 557 His Brother's Ghost—Buster Crabbe (56 m.)...Feb. 3  
 516 The Kid Sister—Pryor-Clark.....Feb. 6  
 554 Marked for Murder—Texas Rangers (58 m.)...Feb. 8  
 523 The Spell of Amy Nugent—English cast.....Feb. 10  
 508 Fog Island—Atwill-Zucco.....Feb. 15  
 507 The Man Who Walked Alone—O'Brien-Aldridge.....Mar. 15  
 Strange Illusion—Lydon-William.....Mar. 31  
 502 Crime, Inc.—Tilton-Neal.....Apr. 15  
 Shadows of Death—Buster Crabbe (56 m.)...Apr. 19  
 (re.).....Apr. 19  
 Hollywood & Vine—Ellison-McKay (re.)...Apr. 25  
 Phantom of 42nd St.—O'Brien-Aldridge.....May 2  
 Enemy of the Law—O'Brien-Ritter (56 m.)...May 7  
 The Lady Confesses—Hughes-Beaumont.....May 16  
 The Missing Corpse—Bromberg-Jenks.....June 1  
 Gangsters' Den—Buster Crabbe (55 m.)...June 14  
 The Silver Fleet—English cast.....June 15

**Republic Features**

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

- 453 Firebrands of Arizona—Burnette-Carson (56 m.).....Dec. 1  
 408 Thoroughbreds—Neal-Mara.....Dec. 23  
 406 Lake Placid Serenade—Ralston.....Dec. 23  
 407 The Big Bonanza—Arlen-Livingston.....Dec. 30  
 3316 Sheriff of Las Vegas—Elliott-Blake (55 m.)...Dec. 31  
 409 Grissly's Million's—Kelly-Grey.....Jan. 16  
 410 The Big Show-Off—Lake-Dale.....Jan. 22  
 464 The Topeka Terror—Lane-Stirling (55 m.)...Jan. 26  
 3317 Great Stage Coach Robbery—Elliott (56 m.)...Feb. 15  
 411 A Song for Miss Julie—Dolin-Markova.....Feb. 19  
 454 Sheriff of Cimarron—Carson-Stirling (55m.)...Feb. 28  
 441 Utah—Roy Rogers (78 m.).....Mar. 21  
 412 The Great Flamarion—Von Stroheim-Hughes.....Mar. 30  
 414 Identity Unknown—Arlen-Walker.....Apr. 2

**RKO Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No National Release Dates)

**Block 2**

- 506 Girl Rush—Carney-Brown.....  
 507 Falcon in Hollywood—Conway-Borg.....  
 508 Murder, My Sweet—Powell-Shirley (formerly "Farewell, My Lovely").....  
 509 Nevada—Mitchum-Jeffreys.....  
 510 Experiment Perilous—Lamar-Brent.....  
**Block 3**  
 511 What a Blonde—Errol-Borg.....  
 512 Betrayal from the East—Tracy-Kelly.....  
 513 Pan Americana—Terry-Arden.....  
 514 Having a Wonderful Crime—O'Brien-Landis.....  
 515 The Enchanted Cottage—Young-McGuire.....  
**Block 4**  
 516 Zombies on Broadway—Brown-Carney.....  
 517 The Body Snatcher—Karloff-Daniel.....

- 518 Tarzan and the Amazons—Weissmuller.....  
 519 China Sky—Scott-Warrick.....  
 520 Those Endearing Young Charms—Young-Day.....  
**Specials**  
 551 The Princess and the Pirate—Bob Hope.....  
 581 Casanova Brown—Cooper-Wright.....  
 582 Woman in the Window—Bennett-Robinson.....  
 583 Belle of the Yukon—Scott-Lee.....  
 584 It's a Pleasure—Henie-O'Shea.....  
 591 The Three Caballeros—Disney.....

**Twentieth Century-Fox Features**

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

**Block 5**

- 512 Winged Victory—McCallister-O'Brien....December  
 513 Sunday Dinner for a Soldier—Baxter-Hodiak.....December  
 (NOTE: Beginning with January, the practice of designating releases by blocks has been discontinued.)  
 514 Keys of the Kingdom—Peck-Mitchell.....January  
 515 The Fighting Lady—Documentary.....January  
 516 Hangover Square—Gregar-Darnell.....February  
 517 A Tree Grows in Brooklyn—McGuire-Dunn.....February  
 518 Thunderhead—Son of Flicka—McDowall....March  
 519 Circumstantial Evidence—Nolan-O'Shea....March  
 520 The Song of Bernadette—Jennifer Jones....April  
 521 A Royal Scandal—Bankhead-Eythe.....April  
 522 Molly and Me—Woolley-Fields.....April  
 523 Call of the Wild—Gable (reissue).....April

**United Artists Features**

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- Dark Waters—Oberon-Tone.....Nov. 10  
 3 Is a Family—Ruggles-Broderick.....Nov. 23  
 Guest in the House—Baxter-Bellamy.....Dec. 8  
 Tomorrow, the World—March-Field.....Dec. 29  
 I'll Be Seeing You—Rogers-Cotten-Temple.....Jan. 5  
 Mr. Emmanuel—English-made.....Jan. 19  
 Delightfully Dangerous—Powell-Moore.....Mar. 31  
 Brewster's Millions—O'Keefe-Walker.....Apr. 7  
 It's in the Bag—Fred Allen.....Apr. 21  
 Colonel Blimp—English cast.....May 4  
 Hold Autumn in Your Hand—Scott-Field.....May 18  
 The Great John L.—McClure-Darnell.....May 25

**Universal Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

- 9035 Night Club Girl—Austin-Norris.....Jan. 5  
 9020 She Gets Her Man—Davis-Errol.....Jan. 12  
 9039 Under Western Skies—O'Driscoll-Beery, Jr. Jan. 19  
 9010 The Suspect—Laughton-Raines.....Jan. 26  
 9002 Here Come the Co-Eds—Abbott-Costello....Feb. 2  
 9021 Her Lucky Night—Andrews Sisters.....Feb. 9  
 9013 House of Frankenstein—Karloff-Chaney....Feb. 16  
 9036 The Mummy's Curse—Lon Chaney.....Feb. 16  
 9012 Frisco Sal—Bey-Foster-Curtis.....Feb. 23  
 9006 Sudan—Montez-Bey-Hall.....Mar. 2  
 9025 The House of Fear—Rathbone-Bruce.....Mar. 16  
 I'll Remember April—Jean-Grant (re.)....Apr. 13  
 Song of the Sarong—Gargan-Kelly.....Apr. 20  
 Salome—Where She Danced—DeCarlo-Bruce (re.).....Apr. 27  
 Patrick the Great—O'Connor-Ryan.....May 4  
 Honeymoon Ahead—Jones-McDonald (re.)...May 11  
 Swing out Sister—Cameron-Treacher (re.)...May 18  
 See My Lawyer—Olsen & Johnson (re.)....May 25  
 Blonde Ransom—Grey-Cook (re.).....June 1  
 The Woman in Green—Rathbone-Bruce....June 8  
 That's the Spirit—Oakie-Ryan.....June 15

(ED. NOTE: The release dates shown in the last index for the following features have been withdrawn: "Naughty Nineties," "I'll Tell the World," "Penthouse Rhythm," and "Beyond the Pecos.")

**Warner Bros. Features**

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

- 406 The Very Thought of You—Morgan-Parker.....Nov. 11  
 407 The Doughgirls—Sheridan-Carson.....Nov. 25  
 409 Hollywood Canteen—All star cast.....Dec. 30  
 410 To Have and Have Not—Bogart-Bacall.....Jan. 20  
 411 Objective Burma—Errol Flynn.....Feb. 17  
 412 Roughly Speaking—Russell-Carson.....Mar. 3  
 413 Hotel Berlin—Emerson-Dantine.....Mar. 17  
 414 God is My Co-Pilot—Morgan-Massey.....Apr. 7  
 415 The Horn Blows at Midnight—Jack Benny...Apr. 28



**SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE****Columbia—One Reel**

6655	Community Sings No. 5 (9 m.)	Jan. 1
6501	Dog, Cat & Canary—Col. Rhap. (6 m.)	Jan. 5
6856	Screen Snapshots No. 6 (9 m.)	Jan. 26
6805	Kings of the Fairway—Sports (10 m.)	Feb. 2
6954	Korn Kobbler—Film Vodvil (11 m.)	Feb. 2
6656	Community Sings No. 6 (10 m.)	Feb. 9
6602	Kickapoo Juice—Li'l Abner (7 m.)	Feb. 23
6857	Screen Snapshots No. 7 (9 m.)	Feb. 25
6806	Rough and Tumble—Sports (9 m.)	Mar. 2
6657	Community Sings No. 7	Mar. 15
6858	Screen Snapshots No. 8	Mar. 29
6752	The Egg Yegg—Fox & Crow (7½ m.) (re.)	Apr. 11
6703	Goofy News Views—Phantasy (re.)	Apr. 27
6502	Rippling Romance—Col. Rhap. (8 m.) (re.)	Apr. 27
6807	The Iron Master—Sports (9½ m.)	Apr. 27
6753	Kuknuts—Fox & Crow (re.)	May 4
6859	Screen Snapshots No. 9	May 17
6503	Fiesta Time—Col. Rhapsody (re.)	May 18
6808	Hi Ho Rodeo—Sports	May 25

**Columbia—Two Reels**

6410	Woo, Woo!—Hugh Herbert (16 m.)	Jan. 5
6132	Sign of Evil—Black Arrow No. 13 (15 m.)	Jan. 12
6133	An Indian's Revenge—Black Arrow No. 14 (15 m.)	Jan. 19
6403	Three Pests in a Mess—Stooges (15 m.)	Jan. 19
6134	The Black Arrow Triumphs—Black Arrow No. 15 (15 m.)	Jan. 26
6140	Hot News—Brenda Starr No. 1 (22 m.)	Jan. 26
6430	Snooper Service—Brendel (14½ m.)	Feb. 2
6141	The Blazing Trap—Brenda Starr No. 2 (18 m.)	Feb. 2
6142	Taken for a Ride—Brenda Starr No. 3 (18 m.)	Feb. 9
6143	A Ghost Walks—Brenda Starr No. 4 (18 m.)	Feb. 16
6431	Off Again, On Again—Howard (16 m.)	Feb. 16
6144	The Big Boss Speaks—B. Starr No. 5 (18 m.)	Feb. 23
6145	Manhunt—Brenda Starr No. 6 (18 m.)	Mar. 2
6432	Two Local Yokels—Clyde (17½ m.)	Mar. 2
6146	Hideout of Terror—B. Starr No. 7 (18 m.)	Mar. 9
6147	Killer at Large—B. Starr No. 8 (18 m.)	Mar. 16
6404	Booby Dupes—Stooges (17 m.)	Mar. 17
6148	Dark Magic—Brenda Starr No. 9 (18 m.)	Mar. 23
6149	A Double-cross Backfires—B. Starr No. 10 (18 m.)	Mar. 30
6433	Pistol Packin' Nitwits—Brendel	Apr. 4
6150	On the Spot—Brenda Starr No. 11 (18 m.)	Apr. 6
6151	Murder at Night—B. Starr No. 12 (18 m.)	Apr. 13
6152	Mystery of the Payroll—B. Starr No. 13 (18 m.)	Apr. 20
6160	Mechanical Terror—Monster & the Ape No. 1 (22 m.)	Apr. 20
6161	Edge of Doom—Monster & Ape No. 2 (18 m.)	Apr. 27
6162	Flames of Faith—Monster & Ape No. 3 (18 m.)	May 4
6163	The Fatal Search—Monster & Ape No. 4 (18 m.)	May 11
6164	Rocks of Doom—Monster & Ape No. 5 (18 m.)	May 18
6411	Wife Decoy—Hugh Herbert	May 18
6165	A Friend in Disguise—Monster & Ape No. 6 (18 m.)	May 25
6166	A Scream in the Night—Monster & Ape No. 7 (18 m.)	June 1
6423	Jury Goes Round & Round—Vera Vague	June 1

**Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel****1943-44**

T-522	Wandering Here and There—Travel. (9m.)	Dec. 9
W-541	Mouse Trouble—Cartoon (7 m.)	Dec. 23
W-542	Barney Bear's Polar Pet—Cartoon (7 m.)	Dec. 30
W-543	Screwy Truant—Cartoon (7 m.)	Jan. 13
W-544	The Unwelcome Guest—Cartoon (7 m.)	Feb. 17
W-545	Shooting of Dan McGoo—Cartoon (7m.)	Mar. 3
M-590	Little White Lie—Miniature (11 m.)	Mar. 3
K-575	It Looks Like Rain—Pass. Par. (9 m.)	Mar. 3
S-559	Track & Field Quiz—Pete Smith (9 m.)	Mar. 3
W-546	Jerkey Turkey—Cartoon (7 m.)	Apr. 7

(More to come)

**1944-45**

T-611	Shrines of Yucatan—Traveltalk (9 m.)	Feb. 24
T-612	See El Salvador—Traveltalk (10 m.)	Mar. 31

**Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels****1943-44**

A-501	Dark Shadows—Special (22 m.)	Dec. 16
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(More to come)

**Paramount—One Reel**

U4-3	Hot Lip Jasper—Puppetoon (7 m.)	Jan. 5
L4-2	Unusual Occupations No. 2 (10 m.)	Jan. 12
Y4-2	Who's Who in Animal Land—Speaking of Animals (9 m.)	Jan. 19
R4-4	Out Fishin'—Sportlight (9 m.)	Jan. 26
E4-2	Pop-Pie-Ala-Mode—Popeye (7 m.)	Jan. 26
P4-3	When G. I. Johnny Comes Home—Noveltoon (8 m.)	Feb. 2
J4-3	Popular Science No. 3 (10 m.)	Feb. 16
R4-5	Blue Winners—Sportlight (9 m.)	Feb. 23
L4-3	Unusual Occupations No. 3 (10 m.)	Mar. 9
Y4-3	In the Public Eye—Speak. of Animals (8m.)	Mar. 16
E4-3	Tops in the Big Top—Popeye	Mar. 16
U4-4	Jasper Tell—Puppetoon (8 m.)	Mar. 23
R4-6	Game Bag—Sportlight (9 m.)	Mar. 30
D4-3	Magicalulu—Little Lulu (7 m.)	Mar. 2
P4-4	Scrappily Married—Noveltoon (re.) (8 m.)	Mar. 30
J4-4	Popular Science No. 4 (10 m.)	Apr. 6
D4-4	Beau Ties—Little Lulu	Apr. 20
E4-4	Shape Ahoy—Popeye	Apr. 27
L4-4	Unusual Occupations No. 4	May 11
Y4-4	Talk of the Town—Speak. of Animals	May 18
U4-4	Jasper's Minstrels—Puppetoon (9 m.)	May 25
J4-5	Popular Science No. 5	June 1
E4-5	For Better or Nurse—Popeye	June 8

**Paramount—Two Reels**

FF4-1	Bonnie Lassie—Musical Parade (19 m.)	Oct. 6
FF4-2	Star Bright—Musical Parade (20 m.)	Dec. 15
FF4-3	Bombalera—Musical Parade (20 m.)	Feb. 9
FF4-4	Isle of Tabu—Musical Parade (17 m.)	Apr. 13
FF4-5	Boogie Woogie—Musical Parade (17 m.)	June 15

**Republic—Two Reels**

481	Zorro's Black Whip—Lewis-Stirling (12 episodes)	Dec. 16
482	Manhunt of Mystery Island—Bailey-Stirling (15 episodes)	Mar. 17

**RKO—One Reel**

54304	Parallel Skiing—Sportscope (8 m.)	Dec. 1
54105	Donald's Off Day—Disney (7 m.)	Dec. 8
54203	Flicker Flashbacks No. 3 (9 m.)	Dec. 8
54305	Five Star Bowlers—Sportscope (8 m.)	Dec. 29
54106	Tiger Trouble—Disney (7 m.)	Jan. 5
54204	Flicker Flashbacks No. 4 (9 m.)	Jan. 19
54107	The Clock Watcher—Disney (8 m.)	Jan. 26
54306	Court Craft—Sportscope (8 m.)	Jan. 26
54307	Ski Gulls—Sportscope (7 m.)	Feb. 23
54205	Flicker Flashbacks No. 5 (9 m.)	Mar. 2
54308	Athlete of the Year—Sportscope (8 m.)	Mar. 23
54109	The Eyes Have It—Disney (7 m.)	Mar. 30

**RKO—Two Reels**

53203	Swing Vacation—Headliners (19 m.)	Dec. 1
53102	New Americans—This is America (19½m.)	Dec. 15
53402	Ali Baba—Edgar Kennedy (18 m.)	Jan. 5
53103	Power Unlimited—This is America (17 m.)	Jan. 19
53104	On Guard—This is America (17 m.)	Feb. 9
53703	Birthday Blues—Leon Errol (17 m.)	Feb. 16
53403	Sleepless Tuesday—Edgar Kennedy (18m.)	Feb. 23
53105	Honorable Discharge—This is America (17 m.)	Mar. 9
53204	Swing Fever—Headliners (19 m.)	Mar. 16

**Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel**

5257	Canyons of the Sun—Adventure (8 m.)	Jan. 5
5509	Mighty Mouse & the Pirate—Terry. (6 m.)	Jan. 12
5302	Steppin' Pretty—Sports. (8 m.)	Jan. 19
5510	Port of Missing Mice—Terrytoon (6½ m.)	Feb. 2
5353	Nova Scotia—Sports (8 m.)	Feb. 9
5511	Ants in Your Pantry—Terrytoon (6 m.)	Feb. 16
5255	City of Paradox—Adventure (8 m.)	Mar. 2
5512	Raiding the Raiders—Terrytoon	Mar. 9

(Continued on last page)

5256 Alaskan Grandeur—Adventure (8 m.).....Mar. 16  
 5513 Post War Inventions—Terrytoon.....Mar. 23  
 5514 Fisherman's Luck—Terrytoon.....Mar. 30  
 5902 Good Old Days—Lew Lehr.....Apr. 6  
 5515 Mighty Mouse & the Kilkenny Cats—  
 Terrytoon.....Apr. 13  
 5258 Land of 10,000 Lakes—Adventure (8 m.)...Apr. 27  
 5516 Mother Goose Nightmare—Terrytoon.....May 4  
 5517 Smoky Joe—Terrytoon.....May 25  
 5354 Down the Fairway—Sports.....June 1  
 5518 The Silver Streak—Terrytoon.....June 8  
 5259 Isle of Romance—Adventure.....June 20  
 5519 Aesops Fable—The Mosquito—Terrytoon..June 29

### Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

Vol. 11 No. 4—Inside China Today—March of  
 Time (17½ m.).....Dec. 1  
 Vol. 11 No. 5—The Unknown Battle—March of  
 Time (18½ m.).....Dec. 29  
 Vol. 11 No. 6—Report on Italy—March of  
 Time (17 m.).....Jan. 26  
 Vol. 11 No. 7—The West Coast Question—March of  
 Time (16 m.).....Feb. 23  
 Vol. 11 No. 8—Memo from Britain—March of  
 Time (16 m.).....Mar. 23

### Universal—One Reel

9353 Mr. Chimp at Coney Island—Var. Views  
 (9 m.).....Dec. 11  
 9372 One Man Newspaper—Per. Odd. (9 m.)...Dec. 18  
 9235 Painter and the Pointer—Cartune (7 m.)...Dec. 18  
 9234 Pied Piper of Basin St.—Cartune (7 m.)...Jan. 15  
 9373 ABC Pin-up—Per. Odd. (9 m.).....Jan. 15  
 9374 Pigtail Pilot—Per. Odd. (9 m.).....Jan. 22  
 9354 White Treasure—Var. Views (9 m.).....Jan. 29  
 9236 Chew Chew Baby—Cartune (7 m.).....Feb. 5  
 9237 Sliphorn King of Polaroo—Cartune (7 m.)..Mar. 19

### Universal—Two Reels

9693 The Boomerang—River Boat No. 13 (17 m.)..Jan. 10  
 9124 Jive Busters—Musical (15 m.).....Jan. 17  
 9581 Invitation to Death—Jungle Queen No. 1  
 (17 m.).....Jan. 23  
 9582 Jungle Sacrifice—Jungle Queen No. 2 (17m).Jan. 30  
 9583 The Flaming Mountain—Jungle Queen No. 3  
 (17 m.).....Feb. 6  
 9584 Wild Cats Stampede—Jungle Queen No. 4  
 (17 m.).....Feb. 13  
 9125 Melody Parade—Musical (15 m.).....Feb. 14  
 9585 The Burning Jungle—Jungle Queen No. 5  
 (17 m.).....Feb. 20  
 9586 Danger Ship—Jungle Queen No. 6 (17 m.)..Feb. 27  
 9126 Swing Serenade—Musical (15 m.).....Feb. 28  
 9587 Trip Wire Murder—Jungle Queen No. 7  
 (17 m.).....Mar. 6  
 9588 The Mortar Bomb—Jungle Queen No. 8  
 (17 m.).....Mar. 13  
 9589 Death Watch—Jungle Queen No. 9 (17 m.)..Mar. 20  
 9590 Execution Chamber—Jungle Queen No. 10  
 (17 m.).....Mar. 27  
 9591 The Trail to Doom—Jungle Queen No. 11  
 (17 m.).....Apr. 3  
 9592 Dragged Under—Jungle Queen No. 12  
 (17 m.).....Apr. 10  
 9593 The Secret of the Sword—Jungle Queen No. 13  
 (17 m.).....Apr. 17

### Vitaphone—One Reel

1721 Herr Meets Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.).....Jan. 13  
 1503 Glamour in Sports—Sports (10 m.).....Jan. 13  
 1306 Fella with a Fiddle—Hit Par. (7 m.).....Jan. 20  
 1606 Rhythm of the Rhumba—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)..Jan. 27  
 1701 Draftee Daffy—Looney Tune (7 m.).....Jan. 27  
 1504 Bikes and Skis—Sports (10 m.).....Feb. 10  
 1722 Unruly Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.).....Feb. 10  
 1307 When I Yoo Hoo—Hit Parade (7 m.).....Feb. 24  
 1702 Trap Happy Porky—Looney Tune (7 m.)...Feb. 24  
 1505 Cuba Calling—Sports (10 m.).....Mar. 10  
 1404 Overseas Roundup—Varieties (10 m.).....Mar. 17  
 1308 I Only Have Eyes for You—Hit Par. (7 m.)..Mar. 17  
 1607 Musical Mexico—Merrie Melody (7 m.)...Mar. 24  
 1703 Life with Feathers—Mer. Mel. (7 m.).....Mar. 24  
 1506 Swimcapades—Sports (10 m.).....Apr. 7  
 1704 Behind the Meat Ball—Looney Tune (7 m.)..Apr. 7  
 1309 Ain't We Got Fun—Hit Par. (7 m.).....Apr. 21  
 1723 Hare Trigger—Bugs Bunny (7 m.).....Apr. 21

1507 Water Babies—Sports (10 m.).....May 5  
 1705 Ain't that Ducky—Looney Tune (7 m.)....May 5  
 1706 Gruesome Twosome—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)....May 19  
 1608 Circus Band—Melody Master (10 m.).....May 19  
 1405 Overseas Roundup No. 2—Varieties (10 m.)..May 26  
 1508 Mexican Sea Sports—Sports (10 m.).....May 26

### Vitaphone—Two Reels

1105 Nautical but Nice—Featurette (20 m.)....Dec. 2  
 1101 I Am An American—Featurette (20 m.)....Dec. 23  
 1002 Beachhead to Berlin—Special (20 m.)....Jan. 6  
 1106 Congo—Featurette (20 m.).....Feb. 17  
 1003 Pledge to Bataan—Special (20 m.).....Feb. 3  
 1107 Navy Nurse—Featurette (20 m.).....Mar. 3  
 1109 Are Animals Actors?—Featurette (20 m.)..Mar. 31  
 1110 Law of the Badlands—Featurette (20 m.)...Apr. 14  
 1108 It Happened in Springfield—Featurette  
 (20 m.).....Apr. 28  
 1004 Coney Island Honeymoon—Special (re.)  
 (20 m.).....May 12

## NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES

### Pathe News

55264 Wed. (E)....Apr. 4  
 55165 Sat. (O)....Apr. 7  
 55266 Wed. (E)....Apr. 11  
 55167 Sat. (O)....Apr. 14  
 55268 Wed. (E)....Apr. 18  
 55169 Sat. (O)....Apr. 21  
 55270 Wed. (E)....Apr. 25  
 55171 Sat. (O)....Apr. 28  
 55272 Wed. (E)....May 2  
 55173 Sat. (O)....May 5  
 55274 Wed. (E)....May 9  
 55175 Sat. (O)....May 12  
 55276 Wed. (E)....May 16  
 55177 Sat. (O)....May 19

### Paramount News

61 Sunday (O)....Apr. 1  
 62 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 5  
 63 Sunday (O)....Apr. 8  
 64 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 12  
 65 Sunday (O)....Apr. 15  
 66 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 19  
 67 Sunday (O)....Apr. 22  
 68 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 26  
 69 Sunday (O)....Apr. 29  
 70 Thurs. (E)....May 3  
 71 Sunday (O)....May 6  
 72 Thurs. (E)....May 10  
 73 Sunday (O)....May 13  
 74 Thurs. (E)....May 17

### Fox Movietone

61 Tues. (O)....Apr. 3  
 62 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 5  
 63 Tues. (O)....Apr. 10  
 64 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 12  
 65 Tues. (O)....Apr. 17  
 66 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 19  
 67 Tues. (O)....Apr. 24  
 68 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 26  
 69 Tues. (O)....May 1  
 70 Thurs. (E)....May 3  
 71 Tues. (O)....May 8  
 72 Thurs. (E)....May 10  
 73 Tues. (O)....May 15  
 74 Thurs. (E)....May 17

### Metrotone News

259 Tues. (O)....Apr. 3  
 260 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 5  
 261 Tues. (O)....Apr. 10  
 262 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 12  
 263 Tues. (O)....Apr. 17  
 264 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 19  
 265 Tues. (O)....Apr. 24  
 266 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 26  
 267 Tues. (O)....May 1  
 268 Thurs. (E)....May 3  
 269 Tues. (O)....May 8  
 270 Thurs. (E)....May 10  
 271 Tues. (O)....May 15  
 272 Thurs. (E)....May 17

### Universal

385 Tues. (O)....Apr. 3  
 386 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 5  
 387 Tues. (O)....Apr. 10  
 388 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 12  
 389 Tues. (O)....Apr. 17  
 390 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 19  
 391 Tues. (O)....Apr. 24  
 392 Thurs. (E)....Apr. 26  
 393 Tues. (O)....May 1  
 394 Thurs. (E)....May 3  
 395 Tues. (O)....May 8  
 396 Thurs. (E)....May 10  
 397 Tues. (O)....May 15  
 398 Thurs. (E)....May 17

### All American News

128 Friday.....Apr. 6  
 129 Friday.....Apr. 13  
 130 Friday.....Apr. 20  
 131 Friday.....Apr. 27  
 132 Friday.....May 4  
 133 Friday.....May 11  
 134 Friday.....May 18



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## Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....	\$15.00
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New York 20, N. Y.

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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1945

No. 15

### WHAT ABOUT IT, MR. ADAMS?

*Motion Picture Daily* reports that the distribution heads of the film companies have stated that, because of the statutory order issued recently by the British Board of Trade, requiring that a license be obtained to export positive and negative prints processed in Britain for exhibition abroad, the American producer-distributors will have to make changes in their methods of supplying release prints of American pictures to Sweden, Australia, Egypt, India and other countries.

These executives said that London laboratories have been servicing some of the aforementioned countries with release prints of American pictures, but now the prints will have to be made in this country, thus creating a further drain on the already tight raw stock situation.

The British order was, of course, brought about by the raw stock shortage in their own country.

Raw film stock, like sugar, meat, or shoes, is a rationed commodity. The intent behind the Government's rationing of any commodity is to give all parties affected by the shortage an equitable share of the available amount of that commodity. Thus far the War Production Board has not seen to it that equitable treatment be accorded to all those interested in the benefits to be derived from rationed raw film stock. So far as the producers are concerned, the WPB has allocated the available raw stock on what appears to be a fair basis, but it has done nothing about regulating the usage of this stock so that the American exhibitors, who are equally dependent upon the stock for their livelihood, might share its benefits equitably.

The distributors themselves admit that, because of the aforementioned British ruling, they will have to draw raw stock from the domestic market to protect their interests in foreign markets. And the WPB is permitting them to do so at the expense of the American exhibitor.

Letters from independent exhibitors throughout the country have been transmitted to the WPB by National Allied showing that, even prior to the order curtailing release prints, the producer-distributors reduced the number of prints per picture to such an extent that many exhibitors were put far behind in playing time. Moreover, they used the shortage to increase the clearance that their affiliated theatres enjoyed, as well as to extract higher film rentals from the independents.

Mr. Stanley Adams, head of the WPB's Durable Goods Division, which allocates the raw film stock, has stated that "the WPB will not permit . . . anyone to have an advantage to the disadvantage of anyone else. Any indications to the contrary will bring immediate action for relief by the WPB."

Well, what about some action, Mr. Adams?

### COMMON SENSE NEEDED TO MEET COMPETITION ABROAD SUCCESSFULLY

In an interview with the trade papers recently, J. A. McConville, President of Columbia International Pictures Corporation, said that, since the Argentine Government issued a decree making it compulsory for exhibitors to pay percentage terms on Argentine productions, it is now possible for the U.S. distributors to secure percentage terms, thus gaining for their pictures income that is commensurate with their earning power.

As said in these columns before, there is going to be stiff competition in the exhibition of pictures abroad. In each country the native product will be favored over imported product, and although American-made pictures will have greater demand than the pictures of other nations, they will have competition from the local product, and in a tough way.

This paper pointed out in one or two articles that the way to meet competition effectively in a given country is for the American producers to send to that country their best pictures, so that the native population will have a chance to compare the high quality of these American pictures with the average quality of the national product. If the producers should adopt such a policy, the American pictures will sweep aside all competition from local product.

Who can doubt that in Argentina, where the number of theatres is small, and where the money spent on local productions will naturally have to be only a small part of what is spent on pictures in this country, the American pictures will be preferred to those of Argentina if the policy suggested were followed?

If the American producers should not follow the policy of sending only their best product abroad, competition to American pictures will stiffen also for another reason: players native to a given country will become so popular that the mediocre American pictures, and even the best ones, will be outgrossed by the pictures with the local talent. They have had experience on this in neighboring Mexico: I have been told that two Mexican stars, one male and one female, outgross any American star. And the pictures of these stars outgross pictures with the best American stars also in other countries where Spanish is spoken.

The world markets are slipping from the hands of the American companies, for no other reason than that the American producers refuse to listen to common sense. And there has never been a time when listening to common sense would be more profitable than it is now, when the supply of raw stock is getting smaller and smaller.

### THE "ALL-STAR BOND RALLY" SHORT SUBJECT

In connection with the forthcoming Seventh War Loan Drive, Twentieth Century-Fox, under the auspices of the War Activities Committee, has produced an outstanding, 19-minute two reeler musical, titled the "All-Star Bond Rally," starring such players as Bing Crosby, Bop Hope, Betty Grable, Harry James and his Orchestra, Frank Sinatra, Carmen Miranda, Fibber McGee and Molly, Harpo Marx, Linda Darnell, Jeanne Crain, Vivian Blaine, June Haver, Faye Marlow and others.

Not only is this short subject a great salesman for the sale of bonds in theatres, but it is also a top-notch entertainment. Moreover, it gives public recognition to the theatre manager for the great work he is doing in the war effort.

The National Motion Picture Industry Seventh War Loan Committee is putting so much importance on this short subject that it has arranged for the distribution of 1200 prints—double the number customarily issued on WAC shorts—so that every theatre throughout the nation can play it quickly and effectively, in order that it do the most good during the Drive.

"All-Star Bond Rally" will be distributed to the exhibitors rental free. HARRISON'S REPORTS urges each of you to play it *at every show*, for it will, not only spur the sale of bonds, but also furnish your customers with a "solid" nineteen minutes of entertainment.

### "The Valley of Decision" with Greer Garson and Gregory Peck

(MGM, no release date set; time, 118 min.)

A very good drama, ideally suited to the talents of Greer Garson; it should go over very well, for the story, based on Marcia Davenport's best-selling novel, has all the ingredients that endow it with mass appeal. Laid in the Pittsburgh of 1880, the story covers a span of twelve years and it revolves around the unfulfilled love between an understanding Irish servant girl and the son of a wealthy steel baron. It is a beautiful but heart-rending romance, marred by a tragedy in which the young couple's fathers, long bitter enemies, lose their lives in a strike riot. Miss Garson and Gregory Peck, as the lovers, are outstanding, winning the spectator's respect because of their display of fine traits. One sympathizes deeply with them because of the incidents that mar their happiness. One situation that will stir the emotions is where the steel baron, learning that Miss Garson had given up his son, because of their difference in social positions, asks her to become his daughter-in-law. Changing events result in Peck's marrying another woman, but years later, in a powerfully dramatic sequence, he denounces his nagging wife, and reunites with Miss Garson. This ending should please most audiences. Lionel Barrymore, as Miss Garson's crippled, embittered father, has an unsympathetic part, but he plays it effectively:—

Greer becomes a servant in the home of Donald Crisp, despite the opposition of her father, who had been crippled in an accident in Crisp's steel mill. She endears herself to Gladys Cooper, Crisp's wife, and to their four children, Gregory Peck, Marshall Thompson, Dan Duryea, and Marsha Hunt. Love comes to Greer and Peck, but she decides not to marry him because of her lowly position. But when Crisp learns of this, he brings the two together. Greer's joy, however, is saddened by a strike at the mill, encouraged by her father. When Crisp sends for strikebreakers, Greer, fearing bloodshed, arranges for a peace meeting between him and the strikers. But through a misunderstanding, the strikebreakers arrive in the midst of the meeting. Greer's father, enraged, incites the strikers and, in the ensuing battle, both he and Crisp are killed. Grief stricken, Greer withdraws from Peck's life. Ten years later, Peck, married to Jessica Tandy, a childhood sweetheart, leads an unhappy life because of her constant nagging. When Peck's mother is stricken with a heart attack, she calls for Greer, much to the annoyance of Jessica, who feared that Peck's love for her might flame anew. After their mother's death, Duryea, Thompson, and Marsha vote to sell the steel mill, despite Peck's plea that it remain in the family. Greer, to whom Peck's mother had left her share of the mill, sides with Peck and saves the mill by inducing Marsha to change her vote. Incensed by Greer's action, Jessica insults her. Peck, angered, breaks with his wife and, indicating a divorce, reunites with Greer.

John Meehan and Sonya Levien wrote the screen play, Edwin H. Knopf produced it, and Tay Garnett directed it. The cast includes Preston Foster, Reginald Owen, John Warburton, Dean Stockwell and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### "Song of the Sarong" with William Gargan and Nancy Kelly

(Universal, April 20; time, 65 min.)

Mediocre program fare, handicapped by a story that is up to the intelligence of a five-year-old child. The whole thing is no more than an excuse for a group of girls, particularly the leading lady, to cavort about dressed in sarongs. Even the comedy, furnished by Eddie Quillan and Fuzzy Knight, is too inane to be amusing. The best that can be said for the picture is that it has a few catchy melodies, but even undiscriminating audiences will expect to find more than a few tuneful songs. The players are helpless up against the weak story material:—

William Gargan, an adventurer, is hired by an unscrupulous millionaire to steal a hoard of pearls from a native tribe

on a South Pacific island. Despite the millionaire's warning that the treasure was guarded by natives with poisoned spears, Gargan heads for the island in his seaplane. En route, he discovers two stowaways on board—Eddie Quillan and Fuzzy Knight, who had overheard his conversation with the millionaire. Arriving on the island, Gargan placates the suspicious natives by claiming that he was forced down with engine trouble. He learns that island was ruled by Nancy Kelly, a white girl, whom the natives believed to be the daughter of a Goddess. Nancy had been reared and educated by George Cleveland, a pious sea captain, who had been marooned on the island years previously. Aware that Gargan had come to the island to steal the pearls, Cleveland tries to dissuade him. But Gargan scoffs at the old man, and determines to carry out his plan. Meanwhile Nancy falls in love with Gargan, much to the annoyance of George Dolenz, a high caste native, to whom she was engaged. Gargan resists falling in love with her, but tries to get from her the golden key to the temple holding the pearls. Failing, Gargan decides to dynamite the entrance. Dolenz, discovering his plan, pretends friendship and offers to help him for a share of the loot. Gargan agrees, only to find himself captured by the natives, summoned by Dolenz. As altar fires are lit for Gargan's execution, Nancy prays for a miracle. A sudden storm quenches the fire, and the natives, believing that the Gods wished his life spared, unchain Gargan. Dolenz leaves the island defeated, and Nancy reunites with Gargan.

Gene Lewis wrote the screen play and produced it. Harold Young directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### "I'll Remember April" with Gloria Jean and Kirby Grant

(Universal, April 13; time, 63 min.)

Just a mildly entertaining program picture. Some people may find enjoyment in it, but it will not be such as to make them remember it or induce a picture hunger in them. The story, which is a mixture of drama, music, comedy, and murder mystery, is very thin, and little imagination has been used in its presentation. The murder mystery angle in particular is ineffective, for the spectator is not given an opportunity to guess the murderer's identity; the hero, through clues known only to himself, traps the killer with the greatest of ease. Gloria Jean's pleasant singing is the best the picture has to offer:—

Morgan Wallace, a crooked financier, admits to his board of directors that he had gambled away their money, and asks for thirty days in which to make restitution. Because of the shock, Samuel H. Hinds, one of the directors, suffers a heart attack, and is compelled to withdraw his daughter, Gloria Jean, from finishing school. Gloria, to help her father recoup his finances, goes to one of Kirby Grant's talent broadcasts, where she is given an opportunity to sing on the radio. Milburn Stone, Grant's rival on another program, is so impressed with Gloria's singing that he arranges to have her sing on his show. But Grant, lest his sponsors be displeased, tricks Gloria away from Milburn's show and has her sing on his own program once again. Later Grant meets Gloria's father and learns of the impending board meeting at which the crooked financier was to announce whether or not he could return the stolen funds. Grant manages to conceal a microphone in the board room, but instead of broadcasting the financier's remarks, he finds himself broadcasting his murder when the man is shot mysteriously. Circumstantial evidence points to Hinds as the killer, but Grant refuses to believe it. He enlists the aid of Stone, his rival, and both of them, assisted by Gloria, trap the real killer, who turns out to be a window washer employed in the defunct firm's office building; he had been one of the financier's many victims. With Hinds cleared of the murder charge, Grant wins Gloria's heart.

M. Coates Webster wrote the screen play, Gene Lewis produced it, and Harold Young directed it. The cast includes Jacqueline de Wit, Hobart Cavanaugh, Pierre Watkin and others. Unobjectionable morally.



### **"Diamond Horseshoe" with Betty Grable and Dick Haymes**

(20th Century-Fox, May; time, 104 min.)

This musical will undoubtedly prove to be an outstanding box-office attraction; it has been given an elaborate production, photographed in Technicolor, it has Betty Grable for marquee value, and above all it is a good mass entertainment. The story, although of the typical backstage variety, has considerable human interest, and the romance is appealing. It has good comedy, too, with Phil Silvers provoking most of the laughs by his antics and by his running gag around the question of why the show must go on. The production numbers are exquisite and highly imaginative. Betty Grable appears at her best here; she sings and dances, wears the sort of clothes that appeal to women and in general gives an effective performance. Dick Haymes, does very well in a straight dramatic role, less accent being placed on his singing. Others who take part in the action and in the musical numbers include William Gaxton and Beatrice Kay, with specialty numbers being contributed by Willie Solar and Carmen Cavallaro. The music is melodious:—

A feud between Betty and Gaxton, top entertainers at Billy Rose's Diamond Horseshoe, reaches a climax when Dick Haymes, Gaxton's son, falls in love with her. Haymes, a medical student, had quit school against his father's wishes in order to get into show business, but he had promised to return to his studies if he failed to make good. Beatrice Kay, another entertainer, who loved Gaxton but feared that she would lose him, because of his close attachment to Haymes, enlists Betty's aid in a plot to get the boy out of the way, promising her a fur coat for her trouble. Betty accepts Haymes' attentions only to find herself deeply in love with him. She marries the young man, causing a break between father and son when Gaxton accuses her of trickery. Gaxton's opposition causes Betty to leave the show, and she teams up with Haymes in a singing and dancing act that is not too successful. She soon realizes that his heart was in medicine, and she induces him to return to school while she earned the money for his tuition. Gaxton, learning of her sacrifice, begs her forgiveness.

George Seaton wrote the screen play and directed it. William Perlberg produced it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Salome, Where She Danced" with Yvonne de Carlo, Rod Cameron and David Bruce**

(Universal, April 27; time, 90 min.)

This is a very expensive production, photographed in Technicolor, which, despite its hodge-podge mixture of romance, music, comedy, melodrama, dancing, singing, espionage, and most anything else one can think of, may go over with undiscriminating audiences fairly well. Discerning patrons will certainly find it too ludicrous. Revolving around the career of a European ballet dancer, the story, which leans heavily on the long arm of coincidence, begins with Lee's surrender at Appomattox, jumps to Europe for the Prussian-Austrian War, hops back to this country to a booming Western town, and finally ends up in San Francisco. The action includes such incidents as a sword duel, a kidnapping by Western outlaws, piracy, and a runaway stagecoach, and, for good measure, one of the characters is a Chinese philosopher who speaks with a Scotch accent. Ludicrous as it is, the settings are very colorful, and one might enjoy it if he were willing to accept the picture for what it is—a comic strip story played straight:—

The Civil War ended, Rod Cameron, a correspondent, goes to Berlin, hoping to score a "scoop" on Germany's plan to attack Austria. He enlists the aid of Yvonne de Carlo, a Viennese dancer, who agrees to accept advances from Count Albert Dekker so that she might learn of Germany's plans. Cameron scores his "scoop," but he and Yvonne, accompanied by J. Edward Bromberg, her teacher, are forced to flee to America to escape Dekker's wrath. Cameron planned to launch Yvonne on a new career in San

Francisco. En route, they stop at a small Western town, where they put on a show to raise funds. The show is interrupted by David Bruce and his outlaws, who rob the audience and kidnap Yvonne. Bruce, however, falls in love with Yvonne, and decides to reform. He returns the stolen money and joins the group on the trip to San Francisco. Arriving there, Cameron and Bruce contrive to have Walter Slezak, a wealthy Russian, meet Yvonne. He falls in love with her, and offers to sponsor her career. On Yvonne's opening night, Dekker arrives, seeking revenge. Bruce kills him in a saber duel, then steals a stagecoach to escape the law. Pursued and apprehended by Slezak, Bruce learns to his surprise that the Russian had used his influence to square matters with the police, and that he meant to step out of Yvonne's life so that he (Bruce) could have her.

Laurence Stallings wrote the screen play, Walter Wanger produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it. Alexander Golitzen was associate producer. The cast includes Marjorie Rambeau, Abner Biberman and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"A Medal for Benny" with J. Carrol Naish, Dorothy Lamour and Arturo de Cordova**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 77 min.)

Well directed and acted, this is an appealing human-interest drama, with good touches of comedy, and with a timely message to those who are not above capitalizing on the fame of a war hero. The story's locale is a Paisano community in a small California town, and it revolves around an elderly, humble Paisano, who rebuffs the town's bigwigs when they attempt to use his dead son's fame for commercial advantage. Tears and laughter are intermingled in the story, and some of the situations are very stirring, as for instance the one in which the completely overwhelmed Paisano, played superbly by J. Carrol Naish, humbly and with dignity receives the Congressional Medal of Honor awarded posthumously to his son. There is a strong, appealing romance between Dorothy Lamour and Arturo de Cordova. Having learned that the dead hero, her sweetheart, had been unfaithful to her, Dorothy falls in love with De Cordova, but neither declare their love openly lest the truth disillusion Naish. Mikhail Rasumny provides some outstanding moments as a demonstrative Paisano:—

Despite De Cordova's efforts to win her love, Dorothy remains faithful to Naish's son, "Benny," who had been run out of town because of his scrapes with the police. Moreover, Dorothy resented De Cordova's capacity for avoiding work, and despised him for swindling Naish out of his last dollar on schemes that never worked out. But when De Cordova confronts her with proof of "Benny's" unfaithfulness, Dorothy realizes and confesses her love for him. Meanwhile Naish, on the verge of being evicted from his home for non-payment of rent, receives word that his son had died in the Philippines, and that he was the nation's number one hero. Naish soon finds himself caught in an exciting whirl when the town's business men decide to capitalize on the boy's fame. They move Naish out of the ramshackle Paisano neighborhood and install him in a new home, so that newspaper photographs would carry a good impression of the town. On the eve of the presentation to him of his son's medal, Naish learns that his new-found comfort was only temporary, and that his son's heroism was being exploited by the town's "Babbits." Disillusioned, he returns to his shack and refuses to have anything to do with the celebration on the morrow. On the following day, the town's leaders are embarrassed no end when the Governor and a General arrive to make the presentation. But not so the General, who orders his troops to march to Naish's home, where he holds the ceremony. De Cordova joins the Army and goes off to the war, inspired by Dorothy's love, of which Naish knew nothing.

Frank Butler wrote the screen play, Paul Jones produced it, and Irving Pichel directed it. The cast includes Charles Dingle, Frank McHugh, Grant Mitchell and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

## **"Murder, He Says" with Fred MacMurray and Helen Walker**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 91 min.)

This comedy-melodrama should go over well with the masses, first, because it is fast-moving and very amusing, and secondly, because it is different. The action takes place in a "Tobacco Road" setting, and it revolves around the homicidal antics of a wierd hillbilly family whose murderous tendencies among themselves and toward strangers would be unpleasant were it not for the fact that the story is completely illogical and nonsensical. As it is, the situations are so incredible and, in many instances, so broadly slapstick, that one cannot help laughing at what transpires. For instance, one of the lethal means used by the family is a poison that causes the victim's body to glow in the dark. The producers have employed to good effect standard devices such as hidden doors and secret passages to give the proceedings a wierd atmosphere. All in all, it is the sort of picture that should attract considerable attention:—

Fred MacMurray, a public opinion investigator, visits an ancient house in the hillbilly country to inquire about the mysterious disappearance of a fellow worker. He is assaulted by a pair of brawny, moronic twins (both played by Peter Whitney) but saved from death by their whip-cracking "maw" (Marjorie Main). Others in the family included Porter Hall, "Maw's" sixth husband; Jean Heather, her dim-witted daughter; and Mabel Paige, the boisterous grandmother. MacMurray learns that the family was trying to find out the whereabouts of \$70,000, which had been stolen by Barbara Pepper, an imprisoned member of the family, and entrusted to the grandmother, who refused to reveal the hiding place. The hillbillies force MacMurray to pose as Barbara's "boy-friend," hoping the grandmother would divulge her secret to him. The old lady sees through the ruse, but gives him a vague clue just before she dies from poisoning. The hillbillies, believing that MacMurray knew the secret, threaten to kill him, but he is saved by the timely arrival of Helen Walker, posing as Barbara, who crows the family with her six-shooter. Actually, Helen was the daughter of a bank employee who had been held responsible for the \$70,000, and she sought to recover the money. Helen and MacMurray join forces, constantly warding off attempts on their lives. Working out the vague clue left by the grandmother, the young couple finally locate the money and, after numerous chases, succeed in capturing the entire hillbilly clan in a bailing machine.

Lou Breslow wrote the screen play, E. D. Leshin produced it, and George Marshall directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

## **"The Bullfighters" with Laurel and Hardy**

(20th Century-Fox, May; time, 61 min.)

A fairly amusing program comedy, done in the typical Laurel and Hardy manner; it should entertain those who enjoy slapstick and nonsensical farce. This time the two comedians, as detectives, find themselves in Mexico City, where Laurel's resemblance to a famed Spanish matador leads them into a series of complications that culminate in Laurel facing a ferocious bull in an arena. Some of the slapstick situations are highly amusing, but others become tiresome because they are long drawn out. A musical interlude, featuring Diosa Costello, comes as a welcome relief:—

Arriving in Mexico City to track down a curvaceous blonde, Laurel and Hardy check in at a fashionable hotel, where Laurel, much to his amazement, is welcomed royally by the guests. He did not realize that the guests had mistaken him for Don Sebastian (also played by Laurel), a famous Spanish bullfighter, whose arrival from Spain was expected. Meanwhile Richard Lane, Sebastian's agent, has difficulties with Ralph Sanford, a sports promoter, who had agreed to sponsor the matador; Sanford had recognized a picture of Sebastian as one of two Peoria detectives, who

were responsible for sending him to jail for a crime he had not committed. Lane mollifies Sanford by proving that Sebastian had never been out of Spain. Later at the hotel, Lane meets the detectives and mistakes Laurel for his client, but he soon realizes his mistake and explains. When word comes that Sebastian's arrival would be delayed, Lane compels Laurel to pose as the matador under threat of notifying Sanford, who had vowed to skin both detectives alive if he ever caught them. Laurel meets Sanford at a night-club, and signs for a bullfight. On the day of the contest, Lane learns that Sebastian may not arrive in time. He bullies Laurel into agreeing to enter the bull-ring. As he nervously awaits his turn, Laurel drinks tequilla and becomes intoxicated. Meanwhile the real matador shows up unexpectedly and enters the ring. His skillful work amazes Hardy and Lane, who were under the impression that they were watching Laurel. But the hoax is exposed when Laurel, drunk, stumbles into the ring. Sanford, recognizing the masquerade, catches the two detectives and makes good his threat to skin them alive.

W. Scott Darling wrote the screen play, William Girard produced it, and Mal St. Clair directed it. The cast includes Carol Andrews, Ed Gargan and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

## **"Scared Stiff" with Jack Haley and Ann Savage**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 63 min.)

A poor program murder-mystery melodrama, with the accent on comedy, most of which is so silly that the spectator finds it difficult to refrain from yawning. Few of the pictures produced by Paramount's Pine-Thomas unit have been worthwhile, but this one dips to a new entertainment low. The story is extremely thin and utterly confusing, serving merely as an excuse for an assortment of odd characters to chase each other through the tunnels of a huge wine cellar. No fault can be found with the performances, for there is not much that the players could do with the material:—

Jack Haley, chess editor on a newspaper, is constantly hounded by his managing editor (Roger Pryor), because of his inability to recognize news. Sent to Grape City to cover a wine festival, Haley becomes flustered at the bus station when he meets Ann Savage, an antique dealer, with whom he was infatuated, and he absent-mindedly buys a ticket to Grape Center, where she was going. When the bus reaches Grape Center, one of the passengers is discovered murdered. All the travelers, including Veda Ann Borg, an insurance detective, and Robert Emmett Keane, a professor, are herded into a tavern owned by a pair of eccentric, elderly twins (played by Lucien Littlefield), who were not on speaking terms. Haley, having sat next to the murdered man, is suspected. While waiting for the sheriff to arrive, Ann confides to Haley that she had come to the tavern to recover for a client a valuable set of gold chessmen, owned by the twins. The set had been stolen from Ann's client by Barton MacLane, a gangster, who had in turn sold them to the twins. One of the twins had sold his half of the set to Ann, but the other was unwilling to do so. Haley agrees to help her complete the sale. Meanwhile MacLane, who had escaped from prison, was in the vicinity bent on getting the chessmen for himself. Haley's efforts to buy the other half of the set involve him in a series of wierd happenings, which finally result in a chase through the tavern's huge wine cellar, with all the different characters participating. He eventually captures MacLane and the professor, proving that they had committed the murder as part of the plan to steal the chessmen. The crime solved, Haley telephones his editor and, without mentioning what he had been through, apologizes for missing his assignment at the wine festival.

Geoffrey Homes and Maxwell Shane wrote the screen play, and Frank McDonald directed it. Mr. Shane was associate producer. The cast includes George E. Stone, Buddy Swan and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



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1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 1945

No. 16

### Advertising Tie-Ups in Feature Pictures

"One of the most interesting, behind-the-scenes battles waged in Hollywood," states Jimmie Fidler in a recent syndicated column, "receives little publicity. I refer to the constant fight of manufacturers to get their commodities displayed, as prominently as possible, on the screen.

"Almost every big advertising agency has a Hollywood representative whose job it is to see that the agency's clients get a maximum amount of such indirect advertising. Several studios have ironclad contracts which oblige them to use certain products in movie-making. One studio employs Cadillacs when a script calls for an expensive story; another studio has a similar deal with Buick.

"Manufacturers of electrical home appliances know that the casual display of their products in a hit movie boosts sales phenomenally. Companies manufacturing freshly designed mechanical gadgets of all kinds know that there is no more effective means of introducing them to the public than placing them in the hands of a movie star. Tourist bureaus and resort owners vie to have pictures filmed in the locales in which they are interested.

"Watch the backgrounds and props in the next picture you see. You'll be amazed at the number of 'advertising tie-ups.'"

The concealing of advertisements in motion pictures offered as entertainment to the exhibitors and the public is not a new practice. It is an unethical practice against which this paper has fought long and vigorously. Old subscribers will recall the strenuous campaign waged by HARRISON'S REPORTS in 1931 when the producer-distributors, faced with diminishing receipts, resorted to screen advertising, both sponsored and concealed, in an effort to bolster their weakened financial structures.

This paper felt then (and its opinion has not changed) that the harm done to the exhibitors by concealed advertising in entertainment pictures was incalculable; the picture-going public resented paying an admission price to see an advertisement, and the country's newspapers and national magazines, without whose good-will the motion picture industry would have hard sledding, resented the producer-distributors' intrusion into the advertising field.

This paper's campaign against screen advertising

was so intense that the nation's leading and most influential newspapers rallied to its support with powerful editorials, which, within a few months, compelled the producer-distributors to abandon that practice.

Since then, concealed advertising has cropped up in pictures occasionally, but each time that it did crop up, this paper brought the offense to the attention of the exhibitors.

The latest of these offenses occurs in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's, "The Clock." A good part of the action in this picture revolves around its two stars, Judy Garland and Robert Walker, spending the entire night with a Sheffield milk company's driver, who had been kind enough to give them a lift when they missed their last bus. Not only is the name, Sheffield, on the truck kept in plain view of the audience, but the action includes a trip to the company's milk depot, where a large number of their trucks, with the Sheffield name clearly visible, are shown being loaded with milk for the night's deliveries. The young couple spend the night helping the driver deliver the milk, and from time to time other Sheffield trucks appear on the scene.

The Sheffield company, which operates in the New York vicinity, is one of the largest milk distributors in the country.

True, the picture's locale is New York City, and it may be argued that the use of Sheffield milk trucks does nothing but add realism to the atmosphere. But does it add any values to the entertainment? If anything, it will serve to infuriate many a picture-goer, who will rightfully feel that he had been imposed upon. And an infuriated patron shows his displeasure by staying away from the theatres.

Some one at the MGM studio must have been compensated in some form for the advertisement given the Sheffield company in "The Clock." Whether the studio executives know anything about it or not, however, this writer is not in a position to say. Perhaps some smart advertising agent, such as the type Mr. Fidler mentions in his article, was able to sell one of the studio men a bill of goods. But regardless of the means by which the advertising got into the picture, it is bad—bad, not only because the producer uses the exhibitors' screens as billboards without their consent, but also because the public resents it.

### **"Those Endearing Young Charms" with Robert Young and Laraine Day**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 82 min.)

Although the performances by Robert Young and Laraine Day are good, this is just a fair drama, revolving around a war-time romance. The chief fault lies in the characterization of Young, whose actions will displease most spectators. He is shown as a smug, deceitful Army pilot, who stoops to every conceivable trick to win Laraine's love, his intentions being far from honorable. Of course, he eventually falls in love with her and sees the error of his ways, but by that time the spectator finds it difficult to feel kindly towards him. The fact that one's interest is held to a fair degree is due to the assembled players, whose performances are far superior to the material given them:—

In love with Laraine Day, a department store clerk, Bill Williams, an Air Corps mechanic, boasts about her beauty when he meets Lieut. Robert Young, whose reputation for jilting girls was well known to his friends. Young talks Williams into taking him along to Laraine's home to meet her. There, Young uses his natural charm on both Laraine and her mother (Ann Harding), and makes a highly favorable impression with Laraine by suggesting that her mother accompany them to a night club. The end of the evening finds Laraine thoroughly fascinated by Young. Two days later, he goes to the department store where she worked and uses his charm on the woman floor manager, persuading her to let Laraine spend the afternoon with him. He takes her to his flying field, where he pretends that he had been ordered overseas immediately, and bids her farewell. Laraine, deeply in love with him, goes home heartbroken. Later, Young telephones her, saying that bad weather had forced him back. She impulsively confesses her love for him, and agrees to a date that night. Laraine's mother, fearful of Young's intentions, contacts Williams and asks him to see Young. Williams visits Young and pleads with him to stay away from Laraine, but Young tells him to mind his own affairs. Impressed by Williams' argument, Young meets Laraine and confesses that he had lied to her. Laraine, disillusioned, leaves him. Awakening to the fact that he had fallen in love with her, Young tries desperately to see Laraine, but she refuses to talk to him. Laraine's mother, convinced that his love was true, and remembering that a similar occurrence in her own life years previously had caused her untold misery, brings the two together.

Jerome Chodorov wrote the screen play, Bert Granet produced it, and Lewis Allen directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Boston Blackie Booked on Suspicion" with Chester Morris**

(Columbia, May 10; time, 67 min.)

This latest of the "Boston Blackie" crook melodramas is a routine program filler, no better and no worse than the previous pictures in the series. The story is highly implausible, and it follows the usual pattern of Chester Morris being suspected of the crime, with additional evidence piling up against him as he goes through the process of clearing himself. It has some comedy and suspense. As entertainment, it is strictly for those who have not yet tired of the series:—

To protect Lloyd Corrigan's investment in a rare book shop, Chester Morris disguises himself as a famous auctioneer and sells a rare edition of Dicken's "Pickwick Papers" for \$62,000. On the following day, the purchaser visits Police Inspector Richard Lane and demands an investigation on the grounds that the book was a counterfeit. Morris, lest he be suspected, starts a search for the man who had sold the book to Corrigan. His search takes him to an empty warehouse, where he stumbles over the body of the murdered counter-

feiter, and finds an envelope containing the \$62,000 lying on the floor. As he tries to reconstruct the crime, Lane arrives and arrests him on suspicion of murder. Morris manages to escape and, later, learns that Lynn Merrick, an employee at the book shop, had been in league with the counterfeiter in order to raise money to flee the country with her husband, an escaped convict. He learns also that it was she who had committed the murder. Lynn, aware that Morris had found her out, enlists the aid of her husband to dispose of him. After a series of incidents in which Morris foils Lynn's plans and manages to elude the police, he traps Lynn and her husband in their apartment and, at the point of a gun, tricks her into signing a confession just as the police arrive to arrest him.

Paul Yawitz wrote the screen play, Michel Kraike produced it, and Arthur Dreifuss directed it. The cast includes Frank Sully, Steve Cochran, George E. Stone and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"China Sky" with Randolph Scott, Ruth Warrick and Ellen Drew**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 78 min.)

A fairly good war melodrama; it should satisfy the rank and file. The motivating force behind the development of the plot is a strong romantic triangle, revolving around an American doctor, his bride, and his loyal woman assistant. The treatment of the story is not particularly novel, but it holds one's interest well because of the sympathy one feels for the doctor and his assistant, whose lives are made miserable by his scheming, jealous wife. The story takes place in a constantly bombed Chinese village, and there is considerable exciting action, particularly in the closing scenes, where the doctor and the villagers put up a stiff battle against Jap paratroopers until saved by Chinese guerilla fighters. The human interest element is strong throughout:—

While waiting for Randolph Scott to return from a trip to America for money and medical supplies, Ruth Warrick, his assistant, heroically attends to the sick and wounded, aided by Chinese doctors and nurses. Ruth, who loved Scott secretly, is shocked considerably when he returns with a bride, Ellen Drew. She regains her composure and tries to make Ellen as comfortable as possible, but the young bride, sensing Ruth's love for her husband, becomes hostile towards her. The continuous air raids on the village unnerve Ellen, and she determines to compel Scott to return to the United States with her. Scott, however, informs her that they could not leave because they were hemmed in by the Japs. Meanwhile, Richard Loo, a Japanese colonel, wounded and captured by Anthony Quinn, a Chinese guerrilla leader, learns that Dr. Philip Ahn, under whose care he had been entrusted, had a Japanese father. Aware of Ellen's desire to leave the village, the Jap colonel contrives a plot whereby he compels Ahn, under threat of exposing his ancestry, to persuade Ellen to send a telegram in her husband's name to a Chinese in another city, asking for a passenger plane. Ellen, eager to leave the village and to separate Ruth and Scott, sends the telegram, unaware that it was, in reality, a code message for the Japs to attack the village. A few days later, Jap paratroopers descend on the village and, in the ensuing battle, in which Quinn's guerrillas wipe them out, Ellen is killed as she tries to run for shelter. Scott, having realized his love for Ruth, joins her in tending to the wounded.

Brenda Weisberg and Joseph Hoffman wrote the screen play, Maurice Geraghty produced it, and Ray Enright directed it. Jack J. Gross was executive producer. The cast includes Carol Thurston, "Duckie" Louie, Benson Fong and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



### **"Son of Lassie" with Peter Lawford and Donald Crisp**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 100 min.)

If "Lassie Come Home" proved popular with your customers, this sequel should please them even more, for it is a first-rate melodrama, packed full of deep human appeal, fast and suspenseful action, and many exciting thrills. The magnificence of the outdoor scenes, photographed in Technicolor, is breathtaking. This time most of the action takes place in Norway, and it revolves around the dog's efforts to locate his young master, a R.A.F. flyer shot down by the Nazis, and around their eventual escape to England after many narrow escapes. The collie dog, who performed so splendidly in the first picture, again amazes one by his intelligence and sagacity; he makes every scene in which he appears attention-holding. There is an incidental but pleasing romance.

In the development of the story, Laddie, a collie pup, is shown as the mischievous little pet of Peter Lawford, an R.A.F. cadet, whose father (Donald Crisp) was in charge of the kennels on Nigel Bruce's estate in Yorkshire. When Lawford returns to the estate after a six-months absence, he finds that the kennels had been turned into a training post for war dogs, and that Laddie, now full-grown, had resisted all attempts to make a fighting dog of him. Lawford is ordered to a flying field nearby, to which he is followed by Laddie, who hides aboard his plane just before he takes off on a reconnaissance flight over Norway. The Nazis shoot down the plane, and Lawford parachutes to safety with Laddie in his arms. His master injured, the dog goes for help only to be shot in the leg by a Nazi soldier. Wounded, Laddie is found by a group of Norwegian children, who care for him until he recovers. Meanwhile Lawford is given refuge by Norwegian patriots, but the Nazis eventually capture him and take him to a prison camp. Laddie trails Lawford to the camp, arriving there just after he had escaped. A shrewd prison guard, realizing that Laddie was searching for Lawford, takes the dog on a leash. Laddie, of course, leads the guard to his master. During a fight, Laddie disarms the guard, permitting Lawford to overpower him. Together, the boy and dog manage to elude searching parties and, after a series of hairbreadth escapes, they commandeer a Norwegian fishing vessel that returns them safely to England.

Jeanne Bartlett wrote the screen play, Samuel Marx produced it, and S. Sylvan Simon directed it. The cast includes June Lockhart, Billy Severn, Leon Ames, Nils Asther and others.

Suitable for all.

### **"Zombies on Broadway" with Wally Brown and Alan Carney**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 67 min.)

Mediocre. Taking two-reel material and stretching it to feature length is an old device with producers, and this program slapstick comedy is a good example of the practice. The story, which revolves around two Broadway press agents who go to a tropical island in search of a "Zombie," is a burlesque treatment of this old horror theme. The result, however, is indifferent, for the story lacks sufficient material to sustain the laughs. Wally Brown and Alan Carney have the making of a good comedy team, but RKO has yet to furnish them with decent material. Set this comedy down as one that might appeal to the youngsters but will probably bore their elders:—

To publicize a new night-club owned by Sheldon Leonard, a gangster, Brown and Carney promise to produce a live Zombie on opening night, and secretly employ a Negro friend to act as the Zombie. When a radio commentator, hostile to Leonard, threatens to expose the stunt unless a real Zombie is produced, the gangster compels Carney and

Brown to sail to the Virgin Islands to secure one. Arriving there, the boys meet Anne Jeffreys, a cafe singer, who offers to lead them into the jungle in search of a Zombie in return for her passage back to New York. Meanwhile, in a jungle castle, Bela Lugosi, a scientist, was experimenting with a serum to create Zombies, and he was in need of white people to continue his work. One of Lugosi's servants, having seen Brown, Carney, and Anne enter the jungle, captures the trio and brings them to the castle. Lugosi inoculates Carney and turns him into a Zombie before all three, aided by a monkey who steals Lugosi's hypodermic needle, manage to escape. Elated over the fact that Carney was a real Zombie, Brown returns with him to New York, arriving on the opening night of the club. There, the effect of the serum wears off, and Carney reverts to his normal self. Leonard, infuriated, prepares to kill both press agents, but Anne, using the hypodermic needle stolen by the monkey, injects it into Leonard and turns him into a Zombie. It all ends with Leonard being paraded before the night-club's patrons.

Lawrence Kimble wrote the screen play, Ben Stollhoff produced it, and Gordon Douglas directed it. The cast includes Frank Jenks, Louis Jean Heydt and others.

### **"Flame of the Barbary Coast" with John Wayne and Ann Dvorak**

(Republic, release date not set; time, 91 min.)

A good melodrama with music. It has been given an expensive production. Based on San Francisco's famed Barbary Coast at the turn of the century, the story is somewhat familiar, but it holds one's interest well because of the competent direction and acting. Moreover, it contains the type of tense melodramatic action the average picture-goer enjoys. In addition, it has some especially good songs that are sung effectively by Ann Dvorak. The scenes depicting the disastrous 1906 San Francisco earthquake are particularly impressive. John Wayne, as a Montana cattleman, makes a strong, hard-hitting hero, while Joseph Schildkraut, as a "gentleman" gambler, is properly sly and smooth-talking. Their hectic rivalry for the love of Miss Dvorak result in many tense moments:—

Visiting Schildkraut's gambling palace to collect \$500 the gambler owed him, Wayne decides to try his luck at the gaming tables. Fascinated by the brawny westerner, Ann Dvorak, Schildkraut's fiancée and singing star, offers to serve as his guide. He wins heavily, but later, Schildkraut plies him with liquor and, through crooked cards, wins back the money. On the following morning, Wayne learns that Ann had played up to him to make Schildkraut jealous, and that the gambler had tricked him out of his winnings. He goes back to his cattle ranch, where he learns the art of crooked gambling from a professional. After acquiring a new bankroll, Wayne returns to San Francisco to beat Schildkraut at his own game. He wins a fortune, and decides to remain in San Francisco to win Ann, too. In order to impress her, he invests his money in the construction of a competitive gambling palace opposite Schildkraut's, and induces Ann to appear as the star of his show. On opening night, Schildkraut and his henchmen plan to start trouble, but they are forestalled by an earthquake, which makes a shambles of the Barbary Coast. Ann, injured, is saved by Wayne, and she begins to realize her love for him. As the city recovers from the disaster, Schildkraut, a political power, seeks to gain control over the election of a new mayor. Wayne, drafted by the city's leading citizens, enters the political battle, and in a final showdown wins both the election and Ann.

Borden Chase wrote the screen play, and Joseph Kane produced and directed it. The cast includes William Frawley, Virginia Grey, Russell Hicks, Jack Norton, Paul Fix and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Patrick the Great" with Donald O'Connor and Peggy Ryan**

(Universal, May 4; time, 88 min.)

An entertaining comedy with music. In spite of the fact that it offers little in the way of novelty, it has a simple but pleasing story, and the breezy comedy mood that is sustained throughout makes it enjoyable. Donald O'Connor is as versatile as ever and, though he dominates the proceedings, one never tires of him. Peggy Ryan, his youthful partner, is typically exuberant, and together they make a very engaging team, particularly when they sing and dance. The music is pleasant:—

Gavin Muir, a London producer, attends a backstage party in honor of Donald Cook, a musical comedy star, at the insistence of Thomas Gomez, Cook's manager. Gomez wanted Muir to give Cook the leading role in his new show. At the party, Muir meets Donald O'Connor, Cook's son, an irrepressible youngster with his father's flair for acting. Muir surprises the boy by accepting his invitation to visit a summer theatre, where he and Peggy Ryan, his girl-friend, were training for theatrical careers. Impressed with O'Connor's talents, Muir offers him the lead in his new show. O'Connor, unaware that his father expected to play the lead, rushes to a mountain resort, where Cook was vacationing, to tell him of the good news. There, he learns from Andrew Tombes, Cook's valet, that his father expected to play the part. Although bitterly disappointed, O'Connor notifies Muir that he could not accept the part. Later, O'Connor makes the acquaintance of Frances Dee, a glamorous food expert vacationing at the resort, and mistakes her interest in him for love, much to the annoyance of Peggy. The situation becomes complicated when O'Connor introduces his father to Frances and both fall in love; neither one wanted to hurt O'Connor's feelings. It all turns out for the best, however, when Cook, learning that his son had given up the leading role in Muir's show, announces his engagement to Frances and informs Muir that his honeymoon would not leave him time to accept the lead in his show. He urges Muir to give the role to O'Connor. On opening night, Cook and Frances watch O'Connor score a huge success on Broadway.

Bertram Millhauser and Dorothy Bennett wrote the screen play, Howard Benedict produced it, and Frank Ryan directed it. The cast includes Eve Arden, Irving Bacon and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Vampire's Ghost" with John Abbott and Charles Gordon**

(Republic, no release date set; time, 59 min.)

Mediocre program fare. As indicated by the title, this is another one of those fantastic tales that deal with medieval superstitions and the supernatural. This time the story is set in an African jungle, and the usual eerie effects are employed to give the proceedings a wierd touch, but what transpires has been done so many times that the general effect is weak. As a matter of fact, one is inclined to laugh at situations that are not meant to be funny. Juvenile audiences and the really indiscriminating horror-picture fans may find it acceptable, but others will probably find it conducive to sleep:—

A series of murders in a small African town stirs considerable unrest among the superstitious natives, who attribute them to a vampire. Charles Gordon, official of a large rubber plantation and fiance of Peggy Stewart, daughter of the town's leading citizen, decides to travel into the jungle to pacify the natives. He is accompanied by John Abbott, mysterious owner of a waterfront saloon, who had arrived in the town in recent months. Abbott, a suave personality, had ingratiated himself with Gordon and Peggy. During the journey, hostile natives shoot at Gordon's party, and a bullet

passes through Abbott's body without drawing blood or harming him. Revealed as a vampire, Abbott confesses to Gordon that he had roamed the world for over four hundred years, living on the blood of others. Lest Gordon reveal his secret, Abbott hypnotizes him into silence. They return to town, where Peggy attributes Gordon's hypnotic condition to jungle fever. Helpless to fight back, Gordon watches Abbott fall in love with Peggy, knowing that his interest in her will eventually end in her death. The village priest (Grant Withers) takes Gordon in hand, and through prayers helps him to free himself from Abbott's power. Meanwhile Abbott had fled into the jungle, taking with him Peggy, who was completely hypnotized. Gordon and a party of searchers pursue him. Abbott leads Peggy to a pagan temple in a deserted village, where he planned to sacrifice her life so that she could live with him through eternity. His plan is foiled by the timely arrival of Gordon, who rescues Peggy and sets fire to the temple. Abbott perishes in the flames.

John K. Butler and Leigh Brackett wrote the screen play, Rudolph E. Ahl produced it, and Lesley Selander directed it. The cast includes Emmett Vogan, Adele Mara and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Phantom Speaks" with Richard Arlen and Stanley Ridges**

(Republic, no release date set; time, 68 min.)

Like "The Vampire's Ghost," reviewed elsewhere on this page, this, too, deals with the supernatural, but it is more interesting than that picture, and it should make a fairly good supporting feature. Revolving around a scientist who proves to himself that the dead can communicate with the living, the story is, of course, fantastic. Yet it holds one's interest throughout, because the scientist, influenced by the spirit of a vindictive murderer, is compelled to kill the dead criminal's enemies. One is held in considerable suspense because of the unwilling scientist's inability to resist the spirit's will power, and of the mystification the murders cause the police:—

On the eve of his execution, Tom Powers, a surly, vindictive murderer, is visited in his cell by Stanley Ridges, a kindly scientist, whose life studies had been devoted to the theory that the dead can communicate with the living. He asks Powers to aid him by exercising his unusually strong will power in an effort to return after death. Soon after the execution, Ridges is secretly thrilled when Powers' spirit contacts him, proving his theory correct. His satisfaction, however, soon turns to horror when Powers informs him that he intends to use him as a tool to gain revenge on those responsible for his conviction. The scientist revolts against the plan, but the spirit proves his ability to take possession of Ridges' body and mind at will. In the grasp of Powers' sinister spirit, the helpless scientist is forced to kill three persons. In each murder, clues point so conclusively to the seemingly impossible fact that the electrocuted criminal was the killer that the police are completely mystified. Richard Arlen, a reporter, who was in love with Ridges' daughter (Lynne Roberts), and who knew of Ridges' theory, stumbles across evidence pointing to the scientist as the killer. He reluctantly trails Ridges and, after a series of strange events in which he himself is almost murdered, confirms his suspicions. Arlen turns his information over to the authorities, who apprehend the half-crazed scientist and make him pay with his life for the murders Powers' spirit had instigated.

John K. Butler wrote the screen play, Donald H. Brown produced it, and John English directed it. The cast includes Charlotte Wynters, Jonathan Hale, Pierre Watkin, Marian Martin and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



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New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 1945

No. 17

### The Future of Color in Motion Pictures

As a result of the success that the 16-mm. Kodachrome film has attained, the Hollywood studios have been experimenting on shooting feature pictures in 16-mm. film and then enlarging them to 35-mm. for regular theatre exhibition. Some of the war films were photographed on 16-mm. Kodachrome film and then enlarged. The results were fairly satisfactory, but not satisfactory enough for them to become of general use.

The Technicolor process employs three negatives, the color prints from which are superimposed in the final printing. Such a process, not only is highly expensive, but also requires skillful mechanics, both for the special camera work and in the laboratory. For this reason, the producers hoped that eventually a process employing only one negative in an ordinary camera would be developed.

The Eastman Kodak company has developed such a process, called Monopack, by combining all the colors into one negative, from which color positives may be printed. But it could not become available to the industry until after the war. In the meantime, the Technicolor company is understood to have obtained the exclusive rights to the Eastman Monopack film.

But by obtaining such rights, Technicolor loosed upon itself the anti-trust forces of the Department of Justice, which, according to reports in the trade papers, has been investigating the company to find out if it is operating in violation of the anti-trust laws. The aim of the Department of Justice may be to benefit the entire industry, by making the Kodachrome Monopack process available to every producer of motion pictures.

HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that, when the color process becomes simplified and cheaper than the present color processes, every feature picture and most shorts will be photographed in color. This is bound to introduce into the industry a new cycle.

In a desire to obtain the latest information on the progress of color pictures, HARRISON'S REPORTS again went to the scientist who has been aiding it all these years on all technical subjects that are related to picture production and exhibition, such as, for example, sound, television, third dimension pictures and other subjects. The following represents the viewpoint of this scientist, presented for the benefit of the readers of HARRISON'S REPORTS:

"The public has responded well to color. There is no doubt that, if good color is reliably available without excessive added costs, it will pay the producers and exhibitors to offer color more generally to the

public. A story can often be told more picturesquely through the use of color and dramatic effects are frequently superior when color is used. Good color also makes a picture more natural, and adds attractiveness particularly to the appearance of younger actors and actresses.

"But there are a number of points which the exhibitor will have to keep in mind in connection with color. One of them is the quality of the sound on color prints. It is generally harder to produce a good sound track on a color print than on a black-and-white print because the processing and developing of color prints is a complicated job. Every processing step has to be taken to favor correct color; this may make it difficult to get high-quality sound track particularly in the case of variable-density prints. We do not imply that this is necessarily the case but we do point out that that will be required in connection with good sound on color prints. Furthermore, unless the sound track is uniform with that on black-and-white prints on the same program, the projectionist must change the sound level skilfully when going into and out of color projection.

"One of the problems that has faced the producers in connection with color is the processing problem. The available processes are carried out in only a few laboratories in the United States, which involves shipping negatives to and from these laboratories and securing release prints exclusively from them. It is important that laboratories for processing color pictures, and particularly for making the positive release prints, shall be widely scattered around the United States and shall cooperate fully with the local exchanges. This may involve simplification of color-film processing but it is a necessary step in the wider commercialization of color.

"As matters stand, color pictures are more expensive than black-and-white pictures. The reason for this is that color has a number of problems and added costs which are not involved in black and white. Thus, the sets in the studio must be of correct and interesting color. Outdoor scenes have to be taken at the right season of the year or under a type of sunlight or cloud light suitable for color effects.

"The lighting in the studio must also be more powerful than for black and white because color processes require five to ten times as much light (or exposure) as black and white. Crowding a sufficient number of powerful lights into the studio is sometimes a problem, because of the air-conditioning demands as well as of space limitations.

(Continued on last page)

### **"Wonder Man" with Danny Kaye and Virginia Mayo**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 96 min.)

An hilarious comedy. Danny Kaye's versatility makes it highly entertaining and, if one is to judge from the continuous laughter by those who attended the exhibitor trade show in this city, the picture should prove to be an outstanding box-office success. Kaye is cast as twin brothers, one a brash night-club performer, and the other a studious chap. The comedy is caused by the complications that enter the life of the studious one when his brother, murdered by gangsters, returns as a ghost and compels him to take his place so as to bring the gangsters to justice. The story is, of course, fantastic, and the action is silly, but very entertainingly so, for the situations are extremely comical, and Kaye is given ample opportunity to display his unique comedy talents. As a matter of fact, without him the picture would be just another musical. It has been produced on a lavish scale and photographed in Technicolor:—

On the eve of his marriage to Midge (Vera-Ellen), his dancing partner, Buzzy Bellew (Kaye) is murdered by two henchmen of a notorious gangster; Buzzy was a witness to a killing perpetrated by the gangster. Shortly after Buzzy's body is dumped into a park lake, Edwin Dingle (also Kaye), his scholarly twin brother, from whom he had been separated for many years, hears a voice instruct him to go to the park. There he is met by Buzzy's ghost, who explains his murder and insists that Edwin impersonate him so that he could deliver to the District Attorney (Otto Kruger) the evidence needed to convict the gangster. Edwin refuses, but the ghost, by entering Edwin's body, proves that he can compel his scholarly brother to act gay and brash. Edwin proceeds to impersonate Buzzy and, whenever he finds himself in a situation foreign to him, he is saved by the timely appearance of his ghost twin. Edwin soon finds himself in a jam with Virginia Mayo, a librarian, with whom he was in love; Midge, who, believing him to be Buzzy, expected him to marry her; and the gangster, who, too, mistook him for Buzzy and wanted him killed once again. Edwin is eventually compelled to flee from the gangster's henchmen (Allen Jenkins and Edward Brophy), who chase him through the streets of New York and corner him backstage at the Metropolitan Opera House. There, Edwin masquerades as a grand opera baritone, and by singing the story of the gangsters' murders to the District Attorney seated in a box, he succeeds in having them captured. Buzzy's spirit satisfied, Edwin resumes his normal, placid life.

Don Hartman, Melville Shavelson, and Philip Rapp wrote the screen play, Samuel Goldwyn produced it, and Bruce Humberstone directed it. The cast includes Donald Woods, S. Z. Sakall, the Goldwyn Girls and others. Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Escape in the Desert" with Philip Dorn, Helmut Dantine and Jean Sullivan**

(Warner Bros., May 19; time, 79 min.)

Fair. Although decidedly inferior to the original, this remake of "The Petrified Forest" should go over fairly well with the indiscriminating action fans, for the melodramatic action is quite exciting. It is, however, of program grade. Patrons familiar with the play may find the picture disappointing, for the story lacks the emotional quality and philosophical content of the original. This time the hero is a Dutch flier, and the villains, instead of gangsters, are escaped Nazi prison-

ers of war. The setting, an inn in the Arizona desert, remains the same. As in the original, the excitement is caused by the villains' keeping the inn's occupants prisoners while waiting for an opportunity to escape a police dragnet, and by the efforts of the occupants to get word to the outside. The closing scenes, where the Nazis are captured and the Dutch flier gives vent to his feelings against Nazi bestiality by whipping the leader, reach a high pitch of excitement. There is some comedy and a romance:—

Philip Dorn, a Dutch flier hitchhiking across the United States to see the country prior to his joining an Allied Air Force, is given a lift by Samuel H. Hinds, elderly owner of an inn in Death Valley, who mistakes him for one of four escaped Nazi prisoners, known to be in the vicinity. Arriving at the inn, Hinds telephones the authorities, but he regrets his action when Dorn establishes his identity. Jean Sullivan, Hinds' granddaughter, who was tired of living in the desert, becomes infatuated with Dorn and begs him to take her away with him, much to the annoyance of Bill Kennedy, the inn's handyman, who was in love with her. Dorn, though drawn to Jean, decides to leave without her. Back on the open road, he is intercepted by the escaped Nazis (Helmut Dantine, Kurt Kruger, Hans Schumm, and Rudolph Anders), who had hi-jacked a passing truck. They force Dorn to lead them back to the inn, where they planned to secure clothes, weapons, and a car with gas to take them to the Mexican border. Discovering the gas tanks dry, and learning that a delivery would be made late that evening, the Nazi decide to wait. They make the inn's occupants their prisoners, treating them brutally. Dorn manages to get out of the inn to the safety of an adjacent mine, and urges a passing motorist to notify the sheriff. When the gasoline truck arrives, Dantine and his men prepare to leave, but the arrival of the sheriff and his men stops them. Using the inn's occupants as hostages, Dantine tries to make a deal for his escape, but Dorn, aided by the sheriff, subdues and captures the Nazis.

Thomas Job wrote the screen play, Alex Gottlieb produced it, and Edward A. Blatt directed it. The cast includes Alan Hale, Irene Manning, Blayney Lewis and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Mr. Muggs Rides Again" with the East Side Kids**

(Monogram, June 8; time, 64 min.)

The followers of the "East Side Kid" pictures should find this latest in the series acceptable program fare. Although the story is a re-hash of a horse-racing plot that has been done many times, and although the treatment is conventional, it has enough human interest, awakened by the friendship between the "Kids" and a small stable owner, and enough comedy and excitement to satisfy those who are not too fussy about story material. The usual complications, which show the hero being barred from racing because of a crooked gambler's machinations only to be reinstated in time to ride his horse to victory, occur:—

After refusing to "throw" a race for George Meeker, a crooked gambler, Leo Gorcey, a jockey, is framed by Meeker's assistant (Bernard Thomas), so that it appears that he had won the race dishonestly. The stewards bar Gorcey from the track. Just as Gorcey and his friends (the "East Side Kids") prepare to return to New York, they learn that Meeker had engineered a sheriff's sale in an attempt to win



possession of Storm Cloud, a prize horse, owned by Minerva Urecal, a small stable owner, who owed Meeker a feed bill. The "Kids" thwart Meeker's plan by paying the bill, but Miss Urecal insists that they take with them Sweet Alice, her other horse, as security for their loan. The "Kids" bring the horse to their East Side clubroom, where they soon find themselves in trouble with the city's Health Department. They are saved from arrest by the timely arrival of Miss Urecal, now prosperous, who takes them back to the track to help train Storm Cloud for a big race, the winning of which would help her to retire. Lest Storm Cloud win the race and cause him to lose heavily, Meeker dopes the horse, forcing it to be withdrawn from the race. Meanwhile Thomas, Meeker's henchman, falls in love with Nancy Brinckman, Miss Urecal's niece, who induces him to leave the gambler and to confess the plot that had barred Gorcey as a jockey. Reinstated, Gorcey persuades Miss Urecal to substitute Sweet Alice for Storm Cloud. He rides the horse to victory.

Harvey Gates wrote the screen play, Sam Katzman and Jack Dietz produced it, and Wallace Fox directed it. The cast includes Huntz Hall, Billy Benedict, Pierre Watkin and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

#### **"Hitchhike to Happiness" with Al Pearce, Dale Evans and Brad Taylor**

(Republic, no release date set; time, 72 min.)

Just a minor program musical, best suited for the lower-half of a mid-week double bill. Very little novelty has been used in the development of the moss-covered plot, and the action is slow because of an overabundance of dialogue. Al Pearce, a good comedian, tries hard to make his part effective, but he, as the others, is hampered by the weak material. The best that can be said for it is that it has a few "catchy" melodies, sung pleasantly by Dale Evans:—

Dale Evans, a star radio singer, returns from Hollywood to New York to visit the people she had known before gaining fame. She visits a restaurant owned by Al Pearce, a good-natured fellow, who had often aided her in bad times. Unaware that she was the famous "Alice Chase" (her radio name), Pearce offers to help her once again. Dale, without revealing her identity, declines his offer. In the restaurant, she meets and falls in love with Brad Taylor, a struggling songwriter, whose melodies thrilled her. Meanwhile Pearce, whose ambition it was to become a playwright, becomes the victim of a cruel gag when three of his Broadway "friends" trick Willy Trenk, a prominent Hungarian producer, into buying a play written by him; they had represented Pearce as a brilliant playwright. When Trenk learns of the fraud, he threatens to sue Pearce for the financial advance he had given him. Pearce, however, tricked by his "friends," had spent the money. To help Pearce out of his predicament, Taylor suggests to Dale that she impersonate "Alice Chase," the radio star, to simulate Trenk's interest in Pearce's play by pretending an interest in it herself. Dale, still hiding her identity, accepts the suggestion and manages to obtain Trenk's promise to back the show, offering to play the leading role herself. Taylor, learning that Dale was "Alice Chase," believes that she had been kidding him; he leaves her. Although unhappy over Taylor's disappearance, Dale does her utmost to put the show in shape. On opening night, she appears as a guest star on a radio program and sings one of Taylor's senti-

mental ballads in the hope that he would hear it and return to her. He does, in time to witness the show's success.

Jack Townley wrote the screen play, Donald H. Brown produced it, and Joseph Santley directed it. The cast includes William Frawley, Jerome Cowan and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

#### **"Blood on the Sun" with James Cagney and Sylvia Sydney**

Very good! It is a real thriller, with James Cagney cast in the sort of role that will delight his fans. The action takes place in Japan in 1928, and it revolves around the efforts of a fearless American newspaperman to smuggle out of the country a secret Japanese plan for world conquest. It is a tale of murder and Japanese trickery, in which Cagney, as the newspaperman, uses his fists freely and often resorts to judo in his dauntless fight to overcome the Japs' efforts to recover the document, the existence of which they could not admit. Some of the situations make one's hair stand on end and, though the story is somewhat far-fetched, it is fast-moving, interesting, and holds one in suspense from start to finish. Cagney's romance with Sylvia Sydney, a glamorous Eurasian spy, provides a steady undercurrent of excitement, since one cannot tell until towards the finish which side she was on. The action has some good comedy:—

Cagney, managing editor of an English-language newspaper in Tokyo, learns of the Jap plan for world conquest and publishes the story, arousing the indignation of Jap officials, who deny the existence of such a plan. Through a series of incidents in which Wallace Ford, his best friend and reporter, is murdered by the Imperial Secret Police, Cagney obtains the only copy of the plan. But he is compelled to conceal it when the police arrive at his home suddenly. He is beaten and taken to jail. On the following morning, upon his release, Cagney determines to report Ford's murder to the American Embassy, but when the Japs blandly deny his accusations, and even prove that he had been arrested because of a drunken brawl, Cagney realizes the futility of pressing his claim. He returns to his home to recover the concealed plan only to find that it had been stolen. Later, when he is summoned to the home of the Jap premier, who tactfully suggests that he return the plan, Cagney realizes that some one unknown to either the Japs or himself had the plan. Bluffing, Cagney offers to produce the plan when the murderers of his friend are convicted for the crime. Sylvia Sydney, a beautiful Eurasian spy, is ordered by the premier to become friendly with Cagney in an effort to recover the plan. Cagney falls in love with her and, after finding cause to suspect her, learns that she had the plan in her possession and that, in reality, she was a Chinese agent who had cleverly gained the premier's confidence. When Sylvia's duplicity is found out by the Japs, Cagney, in a series of swift-moving events, manages to get her aboard an American freighter with the plan. Then, to make good her escape, he becomes involved in a bloody struggle with the Imperial police, who finally shoot him down at the gates of the American Embassy, where wounded but still alive he is given refuge.

Lester Cole wrote the screen play, William Cagney produced it, and Frank Lloyd directed it. The cast includes Porter Hall, John Emery, Robert Armstrong, Rhys Williams and others.

Unobjectionable morally. \*(United Artists, 94 min.)

"The costumes of the actors in color pictures must of course be more carefully selected to be in color harmony with the surroundings, or to be realistic, as the case may be. This sometimes prevents the use of available material.

"And makeup is a more difficult problem, as is clear enough in looking at some of the more clumsy and unpleasant effects which one occasionally sees in color pictures where the wrong sort of makeup has been used.

"Since color pictures require so much more light in the studio than black-and-white pictures, stopping down the lens is not often practical, and accordingly depth of focus in color pictures is often badly limited. This leads to a certain amount of trouble in patching closeups, medium shots, and long shots. While there are ways of getting around this difficulty, they have not as yet come into practice in the studios. Quite a few color pictures have had to avoid real depth in the sets, with any foreground action, for this reason.

"Some types of stories are much more suitable for color than others. Pageant pictures, musical comedies, and Westerns naturally give good results, if well handled. The 'society' comedy, or usual dramatic production gains less from color except if the color is very skilfully used. Accordingly the story should be carefully examined for color effects in order to get the greatest possible advantage through the use of color.

"Further, those who plan the sets and costumes must have artistic taste and a knowledge of public preferences and responses to color. Some of the color pictures show a sad lack of any wise planning in this respect. But doubtless there will be found competent artists, who can handle this problem.

"All in all, the production of a color picture is a bigger job than a black-and-white picture, and it is not astonishing that it costs more at the present time. However, with added experience, it should be possible to keep the cost of a color picture not too far above that of a black-and-white picture.

"In the theater the color pictures require more care in handling for successful presentation. A good bright screen is necessary if color pictures are to 'sparkle' and to show the full value of the color process—particularly for the blue and green tints. Furthermore, the projectionist must focus color pictures extremely carefully to get the best effects, because an out-of-focus color picture looks far more 'smeary' than a black-and-white picture and, in addition, shows false color rims around objects.

"Since color prints are more expensive than black-and-white prints, they have to be particularly carefully handled by the projectionist, else the exhibitor will face a considerable bill for damaged film.

"One question which may come up when color becomes more generally used is whether some of the stars have good coloring and therefore show up well in color pictures. It is not certain that all stars who have done well in black-and-white pictures will be 'chromogenic,' that is, attractive when shown in color. Those stars who are chromogenic will of course have a great advantage in that respect just as did the stars who were able to speak clearly at the time that the silent pictures went out and the talking movies came in.

"In selecting youngsters for future film stars or starlets, the producers should look out for those who are

particularly attractive in color. It will be easier to exploit these stars both in the trailers and the features.

"One of the reasons why color has gone forward rather slowly, apart from the difficulty of producing good color pictures, is the cost of the negative and the release prints. It is easy to add hundreds of thousands of dollars to the cost of production of a black-and-white picture by putting it into color, particularly if costs are not closely controlled. As matters stand, color prints for the theater cost several times as much as those for black and white. It is practically certain that they will never be as low in cost as the present black-and-white prints.

"There are at least four major color processes which may be useful for postwar theater work. One of these of course is Technicolor. In Technicolor, until recently, a special camera of the color-separation type was necessary. It was a costly and ingenious instrument, which some seemed to find less convenient than the standard studio camera for black-and-white. But recently there have been produced 'monopack' processes which provide a single-magazine film that can be used in any ordinary camera. This is a great step forward so far as convenience is concerned, particularly providing such monopack film can be developed locally by the producer in his own laboratory and that release prints can be made conveniently in various parts of the country. The question of high-quality dupe negatives also requires study in this connection.

"The Eastman Company has produced Kodachrome film which enables excellent originals to be made on film of any size. Some of the 16-mm. Government pictures on Kodachrome have been extremely good and indicate that monopack processes of the Kodachrome type should be satisfactory for 35-mm. original negatives and release prints. Since all the color processes are likely to be further improved after the war, this prospect seems particularly hopeful.

"The Agfa-Ansco color film is understood also to be a good product, which should be available for 35-mm. purposes sometime after the war. It has been rumored that the DuPont Company also has a monopack process available.

"It looks as if good monopack negative processes will be available to the producers after the war and will enable making high-quality release prints. It is to be hoped that there will be healthy technical and commercial competition between the various groups so that each of them may produce a superior product and at a lower cost.

"Judging from present indications, it will not be many years before most or all of the A pictures will be in color. Putting the B pictures into color will take more time and will await lowered production, negative, and print costs for color work.

"It is a good idea for the motion-picture industry to go to color as fast as the industry can afford to do so and to deliver a high-grade product in color. Television is no longer 'around the corner'—and this means that the theaters should have the best possible product. Television will probably be in black and white for a number of years to come and there is no reason why the theaters should not maintain their lead in the color field during that period. To do so means public satisfaction and increased returns to the industry."



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

## Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....	\$15.00
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35c a Copy	

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New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1945

No. 18

### CALLING MR. TOM CONNORS

The following, in part, is from a bulletin dated April 30, issued by Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors:

#### "WHAT HAPPENED TO CALL OF THE WILD?"

"Numerous trusting exhibitors, relying on 20th Century-Fox work sheets and sales talks, signed applications for groups of pictures including the Clark Gable re-issue 'Call of the Wild,' only to find this picture had been omitted from the approved contract. This happened not once, but twice.

"One exhibitor leader recently wired Tom Connors, Fox's Vice-President in charge of World Distribution, charging that prints of the picture are resting on the shelves of the exchanges, adding: 'In view of the critical raw stock situation . . . we think an explanation is due not only to those who bought this picture in good faith, but also to the War Production Board.'

"This phase of the matter properly is an issue between 20th Century and Mr. Stanley Adams of W.P.B. It is hoped that this official will inquire into the facts.

"But more is involved than a possible waste of raw stock. A Clark Gable picture—even a re-issue—would be manna to many picture-starved exhibitors. Presence of 'Call of the Wild' in the groups undoubtedly was an incentive for exhibitors to sign the contracts. Release of the picture now would bolster 20th Century's sagging good will and also would yield tidy film rentals. . . .

"This is how the matter stands and will continue to stand until 20th Century either delivers the picture in accordance with the deals worked out between the exhibitors and the salesmen or until 20th Century offers a *bona fide* explanation as to why the picture was withheld. The usual eye-wash as to the other wonderful pictures in the group won't do. We've heard that one before."

HARRISON'S REPORTS has omitted from the bulletin suggestions as to the possible reasons why 20th Century-Fox has not delivered "Call of the Wild." Before publishing these suggestions, this paper will first endeavor to obtain from 20th Century-Fox a statement of the circumstances and the facts involved in the matter. The writer has tried to get in touch with Mr. Connors, but up to press time he had not been available for comment.

It can readily be seen, however, that the charges National Allied has brought against 20th Century-Fox reveal that a deplorable situation exists between the company and its customers. These customers are entitled to know why "Call of the Wild" was sold to

them twice within one year and why it has been withdrawn from the approved contract each time.

Then again, there is the matter of the raw stock used in the prints of this picture. Allied says that this is an issue between the company and the WPB. HARRISON'S REPORTS, however, feels that, since the exhibitors have a definite stake in every foot of this critical stock, the shortage of which is causing them untold headaches, an explanation to them is more urgent than to the WPB, which up to this time has done nothing about recognizing exhibition's equity in raw stock. Under proper WPB control, 20th Century-Fox might not have been able to process what is claimed to be three hundred prints of this picture only to have them remain on the shelves of the exchanges while the exhibitors go hungry for pictures because of the raw stock shortage.

Pending a statement from Mr. Connors, HARRISON'S REPORTS will withhold further comment until next week, at which time it will have more to say about this matter.

### THE SENATE INVESTIGATION IS ON

According to reports in the trade papers, Mr. Dewey Anderson, counsel for the U.S. Senate Small Business Committee, which recently announced its intention to investigate monopolistic practices in the film industry to determine whether or not independents are being forced out of business, was to confer last Wednesday with officials of the Department of Justice. The purpose of the conference was to try to reach an understanding on the objectives of both groups, and to discuss some of the several hundred complaints that have been sent to the Committee since it announced the investigation.

The trade papers state that complaints from independent exhibitors are reaching the Committee at the rate of about a dozen each day.

At the time that this investigation was announced, HARRISON'S REPORTS was of the opinion (and still is) that the Committee could save much time and money by referring to the files of the Department of Justice, which has spent many years carefully gathering information and facts relative to monopolistic practices in the industry. This paper stated that, if the Committee would merely digest the information contained in these files, it would become as fully convinced about the existence of these monopolistic practices as if it had conducted an independent investigation. It was pointed out that the time and effort that would be required for a needless investigation could be put to better use in the formulation of a proposed plan to eliminate these practices.

(Continued on last page)

### **"Swing Out, Sister" with Rod Cameron and Frances Raeburn**

(Universal, May 18; time, 60 min.)

Other than a few tuneful but not outstanding musical interludes, there is not much to recommend in this program comedy, which is decidedly inferior to most pictures of this type produced by Universal. The story is so inane that one loses interest in the outcome. Moreover, the action is considerably slow and the comedy is forced. There is really not one situation that will remain in one's mind. Nor do the characters do anything to arouse one's sympathy since most of their actions are ridiculous. Arthur Treacher provokes some laughs by his actions as a "swing" music lover:—

Rod Cameron and Arthur Treacher, his friend, classical musicians with a secret love for "swing" music, are invited to the home of Billie Burke, sponsor of a classical music society. There they meet Frances Raeburn, Miss Burke's niece, and Jacqueline De Wit, her pal. Frances pretended to her family that she was studying classical music, but actually she and Jacqueline worked in a night-club as a singing team. Unaware that Frances was a lover of "hot" music, Cameron plans to convert her from a classical singer to a "jive" singer. Both eventually learn of their mutual love for "swing," and for one another. Meanwhile Milburn Stone, the night-club owner, who hoped to marry Frances, learns of her new romance and determines to break it up. He arranges for Frances' family to come to the night-club to hear her sing, making it appear as if Cameron had revealed her secret. Peeved, Frances decides to marry Stone, but through the friendly interference of Treacher and Jacqueline, it all ends with both lovers being reunited.

Henry Blankfort wrote the screen play, Bernard W. Burton produced it, and Edward Lilley directed it. The cast includes Samuel S. Hinds, Fuzzy Knight, Constance Purdy, the Leo Diamond Quintet, Selika Pettiford and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Fighting Guardsman" with Willard Parker and Anita Louise**

(Columbia, May 24; time, 84 min.)

Although there is nothing distinctive about this costume picture, and though it does not rise above the level of program fare, it should offer fairly good entertainment for audiences that like heroic, "Robin Hood" acts, sword play, and other thrills, irrespective of logic. To the intelligent element, some of the situations will prove deridingly laughable. The story, based on Alexandre Dumas' "The Companions of Jehu," revolves around a young French nobleman, who secretly leads a band of oppressed peasants in revolt against the tyranny of Louis XVI. It has a fair share of excitement drawn from stock melodramatic situations, a romance, and some comedy. No one in the cast means anything at the box-office, but the performances are passable:—

Masking his identity, Willard Parker, a French nobleman, leads his band of peasants in daring raids against the King's mail coaches, confiscating gold extorted from the people and distributing it among

the poor. Through Janis Carter, an innkeeper's daughter who becomes the King's mistress, Parker learns of the King's plans to capture him and is enabled to turn every situation to his own advantage. Parker, in his capacity as a nobleman, defends the actions of the "mysterious bandit," arousing the wrath of George Macready, the King's aide. In a duel between the two, Parker declines to harm Macready because of his love for Anita Louise, Macready's sister. Meanwhile John Loder, an English nobleman, who was touring France to determine the wisdom of granting a large loan to the King, becomes friendly with Parker. When the King (Lloyd Corrigan) learns that Loder was the bankers' agent, he determines to arrange a marriage between him and Anita in order to win his friendship for France. In the meantime, Parker's secret headquarters are found out, and the King dispatches Macready and soldiers to capture him. Macready is killed in the battle that follows, and Anita, holding Parker responsible, bids the King to hasten her marriage to Loder. But Loder, knowing that Parker was innocent, convinces Anita that she was in the wrong. Parker and his men, having defeated the King's soldiers, storm the palace gates in an attempt to force the King to grant France a constitution. With the aid of Anita and Loder, he overpowers the King's guards, an act that culminates in the French Revolution.

Franz Spencer and Edward Dein wrote the screen play, Michel Kraike produced it, and Henry Levin directed it. The cast includes Edgar Buchanan, Elisabeth Risdon and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Brighton Strangler" with John Loder and June Duprez**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 67 min.)

A pretty good program psychological murder melodrama. The plot is somewhat illogical and the acting occasionally stilted, but since it has several exciting and chilling situations the spectator's attention is held throughout. The story, laid in London, revolves around an actor who suffers a loss of memory during an air raid and believes himself to be the psychological killer he had been portraying on the stage. Considerable suspense is sustained as the actor, following the play's plot, strangles victims who correspond to the characters in the play. The closing scenes, where the maniac meets his doom, are far-fetched but novel:—

Cast as "The Brighton Strangler" in a murder play, John Loder, an actor, loses his memory when injured in an air raid. He wanders to a railroad station, where he overhears June Duprez, a young WAAF, ask for a ticket to Brighton. The word "Brighton" strikes a chord in his memory and it reminds him of his stage role in which he played an escaped maniac who took revenge upon the people responsible for having committed him to an asylum. Believing himself to be the maniac, Loder buys a ticket to Brighton and follows June. They strike up an acquaintance on the train, and June confides to him that she was married secretly to Michael St. Angel, an American flyer, but did not want to tell her family about it. Loder agrees to help her cover up dates with her husband. In Brighton, Loder becomes enveloped in his role of the "Brighton



Strangler" and, in a succession of murders, strangles the town's mayor and the chief inspector of police. Then, in his deranged mind, he believes that June suspected him of the crimes, and he resolves to kill her. Meanwhile June's husband, who had been puzzled by Loder's strange behaviour, sees a picture of Loder and recognizes it as that of the star who was presumed killed in the air raid. He notifies the police, who, together with Rose Hobart, the play's author, search for Loder and find him on a hotel roof strangling June. Realizing that Loder was re-enacting his stage role, Miss Hobart calls upon every one to applaud. Loder, thinking the play had ended, releases June. As he steps back to acknowledge the applause, he topples over the parapet to his death.

Arnold Phillips and Max Nosseck wrote the screen play, Herman Schlom produced it, and Mr. Nosseck directed it. The cast includes Miles Mander and others.

Unpleasant for children.

### **"The Southerner" with Zachary Scott and Betty Field**

(United Artists, May 18; time, 91 min.)

One can find no fault with the production that David L. Loew and Robert Hakim have given this drama, but its value is doubtful for the masses; it is not a cheerful entertainment, for it deals with the suffering, humiliation, and defeat of a tenant farmer in the South, hopelessly struggling to keep his little family together. The theme is so depressing and sordid that its chief appeal will probably be to serious-minded audiences. The story has many strong dramatic and emotional situations, and holds one's interest throughout. Zachary Scott, as the struggling farmer, and Betty Field, as his wife, are excellent, while the others in the cast give them very able support. Miss Field's devotion to her husband and her belief in his ideals give the picture its human touch:—

Seeking independence, Scott, a migratory worker, decides to become a tenant farmer. With his wife, two children, and his shrill-tongued grandmother, Scott moves into a dismal, broken-down shack, where the family spends a dreary winter living meagerly. J. Carrol Naish, his hard-bitten neighbor, grudgingly permits him to draw water from his well. With the arrival of Spring, Scott and Betty start plowing the ground. Their hardships increase when one of the children is stricken with a dread disease (pellagra) and the village doctor warns the anguished parents that they must get fresh vegetables and milk if the boy is to recover. Kindly neighbors come to the aid of the distressed family by furnishing them with a cow, and Scott, after a vicious quarrel with Naish, patched up by their mutual love for fishing, gains the use of his vegetable garden. Cheered by his good fortune, Scott fights off misgivings at having chosen farming instead of a well-paying job in a big city factory; he felt that one good cotton crop would forever rid him of his poverty. Despite many more hardships, Scott and Betty succeed in raising a rich cotton crop, but before they can harvest the fruits of their labor the crop is ruined and their farm devastated by a heavy storm. Scott, dejected, decides to give up farming and take the factory job, but the

sight of Betty and the children industriously repairing the damage restores his confidence. With renewed vigor, he determines to try again in the hope that the new crop will bring him the security he cherished.

The screen play, based on the novel, "Hold Autumn in Your Hand," was written and directed by Jean Renoir. The cast includes Beulah Bondi, Percy Kilbride, Blanche Yurka, Nestor Paiva, Estelle Taylor and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Missing Corpse" with J. Edward Bromberg and Isabel Randolph**

(PRC, June 1; time, 62 min.)

A fairly good program comedy-melodrama. The fact that the story is thin does not matter much, for it moves at a steady pace and has many humorous situations. Most of the comedy results from the efforts of a middle-aged publisher to hide from the police and his family the body of a rival publisher, because he knew that circumstances pointed to him as the killer. The discovery of the body in different parts of the house and its continuous disappearance keep all the characters in a constant state of bewilderment. The main drawback is the lack of star names, but those who see the picture will find it entertaining:—

J. Edward Bromberg, a newspaper publisher, becomes incensed when Paul Guilfoyle, unscrupulous publisher of a rival paper, prints an uncomplimentary story about his daughter. He visits Guilfoyle and threatens to kill him if he slanders his family again. Shortly after, Guilfoyle tries to blackmail Ben Welden, an ex-convict, into murdering Bromberg, but Welden, to retrieve a written murder confession Guilfoyle had been holding over him, murders Guilfoyle instead, and hides the body in the luggage compartment of Bromberg's car. Meanwhile Bromberg, tired of his ungrateful family, decides to go up to his hunting lodge, accompanied by Frank Jenks, his chauffeur. Arriving at the lodge, Bromberg discovers the body. He conceals the discovery in the belief that Jenks had committed the crime to please him. But Jenks, too, discovers the body and, to protect Bromberg, hides it in a wood box. Both men finally learn that neither had committed the crime, but, because Bromberg had publicly threatened Guilfoyle, they decide to say nothing to the police and to get rid of the body. By this time Bromberg's family learns of Guilfoyle's disappearance and, in the belief that Bromberg's sudden vacation had a connection, they decide to go to the lodge. There, a series of farcical events take place with different members of the family finding the body as Bromberg keeps hiding it. Meanwhile Belden, believing the confession was on Guilfoyle's body, comes to the lodge to retrieve it only to be apprehended by the police who had come to arrest Bromberg. He confesses the murder, clearing the misunderstood publisher.

### **"Blood on the Sun" with James Cagney and Sylvia Sidney**

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 94 min.)

In the review printed last week, the distributor, release date information, and running time were inadvertently omitted.

Nevertheless, the Committee seems determined to carry on its own investigation and to obtain its own facts.

Such being the case, it is important that the exhibitors come forward with whatever information they possess as to the methods the big companies are employing to further their monopolies. But if the exhibitors are to aid the Committee in ferreting out these monopolistic practices, they must confine themselves to bona fide complaints, the sort that will stand up under exhaustive study. They must avoid the submission of complaints that are no more than "gripes" from those who have made bad deals. Such complaints will serve, not only to overburden the Committee, but also to create unnecessary confusion.

The only way by which you can help the Committee, and yourself, is to submit to it whatever evidence you possess, preferably documentary, so that the existence of the unfair practices of the producer-distributors and of their subsidiaries may be proved beyond the question of a doubt.

### A FINE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE BRITISH PRODUCERS

A treaty between the United States and Great Britain, aimed at the elimination of double taxation on incomes, has been signed by Secretary of State Stettinius and Lord Halifax, and has been sent to the United States Senate by President Truman for ratification.

Under the treaty, Americans paying income taxes in Great Britain on monies earned in that country, will be permitted to list the tax paid as a deductible item when paying their income taxes in this country. The same, in reverse, will apply to Britishers earning money and paying income taxes in this country.

When approved by the Senate (there seems to be no doubt that it will be approved), the treaty, in addition to bringing tax relief to American investors in British industries, as well as to British investors in American industries, should serve also to induce American picture stars to accept roles in British-made pictures; up to now, many stars have been reluctant to accept lucrative offers from British producers because the double taxation would either leave them with a small percentage of their earnings, or, in some cases, cause them to suffer a financial loss.

With the treaty in force, the British producers should find it much easier to negotiate with the popular American stars, whose appearance in any of their pictures would go a long way toward inducing the American exhibitors to book British-made pictures, for they will feel secure in the knowledge that the stars will attract the public to their box-offices.

Despite the feeling that exists among many British film people that the American film industry is trying to stifle British competition, HARRISON'S REPORTS assures them that the American exhibitors have no national prejudices; so long as British films will draw at the box-office, the American exhibitors will welcome them. Moreover, the American independent exhibitors, in particular, will be delighted to encourage the British producers, for in helping them to obtain a firm hold in the American market they will, not only gain another source of product, but also compel the American producers to vie for playing time. And the keener the competition among all the producers, the better off the exhibitor.

The wise British producer, however, should not depend on star names alone to put his pictures over with the American public; he should make a close study of the tastes of the American public, and he should select story material that will be in conformity with these tastes.

### WHAT A SMALL-TOWN EXHIBITOR THINKS OF US

Every so often subscribers write to me to tell me of the value of HARRISON'S REPORTS in the operation of their theatres. Typical of these letters is the following from Mr. W. D. Pate, of the Royal Theatre in Samson, Alabama:

"I like your Reports. They have been a life saver, or should I say a business saver to me. I had been retired for a few years and out of touch with pictures; my sons had been looking after everything, and all at once they were drafted into the Armed Services and so I had to take over again, and you can imagine how lost I was. Then I subscribed to your Reports and I cannot tell you just how much they meant to me.

"When the salesman comes and wants to sell me pictures I always get your Reports down, and BOY do some of them CUSS. They say you have it in for their companies, but I soon convinced them to the contrary by showing them what you say about certain pictures."

The hostility of some film salesmen who, in order to make deals with exhibitors, will not hesitate to say anything against my paper whenever a bad review is called to their attention, is something I have learned to take in stride after all these years.

As I have often stated in these columns, my one object has been to render service to the exhibitors without being unfair to the producers and distributors. Whatever opinion I have of a company's policy towards the exhibitors I reserve for the editorial pages. At no time is my opinion on pictures influenced by any factors other than their merit. I may find cause to disagree with a company's policy, but if it has a good picture I'll give it a good review.

### SOME INFORMATION ON FILM RENTALS

Pete Wood, secretary of the ITO of Ohio, has been contacting exhibitors in many parts of the country regarding film rentals, and the following are some of his findings as reported in a recent organization bulletin:

*Paramount*: "Salty O'Rourke" — 50% of top flat rental; "The Unseen" — 55% of top flat rental; "High Powered" — lowest flat rental.

*Columbia*: "Song to Remember" — Has been sold to subsequent run city theatres at 35% with deductions allowed for a second feature or premiums.

*T. C. Fox*: "Sunday Dinner for a Soldier" — 50% of top flat rental; "Fighting Lady" — lowest flat rental; "Hangover Square" — low flat rental; "Keys of the Kingdom" — Percentage split starting at 25%; "Irish Eyes Are Smiling" — Top flat; "Tree Grows in Brooklyn" — Top flat with percentage split.

Wood explains that "50% of top flat rental" means that, if your top flat rental is \$100, you should pay no more than \$50 for Paramount's "Salty O'Rourke."



Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

# HARRISON'S REPORTS

**Yearly Subscription Rates:**

United States .....	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions.	16.50
Canada .....	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain....	16.50
Great Britain .....	15.75
Australia, New Zealand,	
India, Europe, Asia ....	17.50
35c a Copy	

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Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1945

No. 19

## More About "The Call of the Wild"

Last week there was reproduced in these columns part of a bulletin issued by Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors, in which that organization charged Twentieth Century-Fox with bad faith in its dealings with numerous exhibitors in connection with the Clark Gable reissue, "Call of the Wild."

Specifically, Allied claimed that "numerous trusting exhibitors, relying on 20th Century work sheets and sales talks, signed applications for groups of pictures including the Clark Gable reissue 'Call of the Wild,' only to find that this picture had been omitted from the approved contract. This happened not once, but twice."

In addition, it was charged that prints of the picture (approximately three hundred according to Pete Wood of the ITO of Ohio) were resting on the shelves of the company's exchanges, involving a possible waste of raw stock at a time when the industry can ill afford such a waste.

Allied pointed out that the presence of "Call of the Wild" in the groups of pictures undoubtedly was an incentive for exhibitors to sign the contracts, and it called upon Twentieth Century-Fox, either to deliver the picture in accordance with the deals worked out between the exhibitors and the salesmen, or to offer a bona fide explanation as to why the picture was withheld.

Included in the Allied bulletin were some suggestions concerning the possible reasons why Twentieth Century-Fox has withheld release of the picture, but HARRISON'S REPORTS omitted publication of these suggestions in order that it might first obtain from the company a statement of the circumstances and facts involved in the matter.

Since then the writer has questioned Mr. Tom Connors, Twentieth Century-Fox's Vice-president in charge of world distribution, about this incident. Mr. Connors, however, has declined to make any statement whatever in behalf of his company. Accordingly, one is left with the impression that Allied's charges are justifiable, and that the position of Twentieth Century-Fox is indefensible.

In view of the fact that Twentieth Century-Fox has not come forth with an explanation to the exhibitors, HARRISON'S REPORTS feels obliged to bring to the attention of its readers that part of the Allied bulletin omitted from last week's issue, and which deals with the possible reasons Twentieth Century-Fox might have for its failure to deliver "Call of the Wild." The omission follows:

"... If the major distributors are as competitive as they soon will be telling Judge Goddard they are, why doesn't 20th Century release this picture? (Editor's Note: Judge Goddard is the trial judge in the New York anti-trust case.)

"A relevant circumstance is that Loew's, Inc. (M-G-M), presided over by Nicholas Schenck, brother of Joseph Schenck, the power behind the throne in 20th Century, is planning to release a new Clark Gable picture, heralding that star's return to the screen. It has been suggested that the President of Metro prevailed on the Executive Production Head of 20th Century to suppress the reissue for fear its release at this time might interfere with the killing which Metro expects to make with the new Gable offering.

"However, it is not necessary to base the obvious inference on the relationship of these dominant personages—and we reject the suggestion. Absence of competition can be traced to deeper causes. If Metro and 20th Century merely distributed films, competition would control their actions. But like other members of the Big Five, each operates a large chain of key-run theatres which exhibit its own films and also the films of other major distributors. Thus the theatres of each such distributor are dependent on the other distributors for necessary supplies of films, and each is dependent on the theatres of the others for necessary outlets for film, and in this community of interest there is no room for the play of competition."

The inference that Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has influenced Twentieth Century-Fox to suppress the reissue lest it interfere with the expected smash box-office returns of the new Clark Gable picture now in production is not a flattering one. It is certainly one that requires either a flat denial by MGM, or, if any influence has been exerted, a complete explanation as to why it was exerted and as to how the exhibitors will be affected by it.

In fairness to MGM, HARRISON'S REPORTS will refrain from making any comment on MGM's alleged interference until it has had an opportunity to discuss the matter with one of the company's executives.

As regards Twentieth Century-Fox, however, this paper is of the opinion that the company, by selling the Clark Gable reissue twice, by omitting it from the approved contract each time, and by refusing to give a bona fide explanation of its actions, has dealt improperly with the exhibitors who bought the picture,

(Continued on last page)

**"Ten Cents a Dance" with Jane Frazee,  
Joan Woodbury, Robert Scott  
and Jimmy Lloyd**

(Columbia, June 7; time, 60 min.)

Ordinary program fare. Other than the title and the fact that the heroine works in a dance hall, there is no similarity between this story and the one that was produced by Columbia in 1931, starring Barbara Stanwyck. This is just a routine romantic comedy, with music, modestly produced, revolving around the adventures of two soldiers on furlough who become involved with two taxi-dancers. Neither the story nor the treatment is particularly novel, but it has enough popular type music and comedy to get by with indiscriminating audiences, especially the "jitterbug" set:—

Privates Robert Scott, a millionaire's son, and Jimmy Lloyd, his buddy, in town on a thirty-six-hour pass, visit a dance hall where they meet Jane Frazee and Joan Woodbury, taxi-dancers. Scott gives Lloyd \$100 and allows him to pose as a millionaire's son to impress Jane. Knowing that Jane was trying to raise \$500 to help a sick friend, John Calvert, the dance hall proprietor, suggests to her that she become friendly with Lloyd so that he (Calvert) could lure him into a crooked dice game, the winnings to be turned over to her sick friend. Jane agrees, and together with Joan and Scott, goes out for a gay time with Lloyd. Both fall in love with each other, and she confesses to him that her intentions toward him at first were not honorable. He in turn tells her about his subterfuge, and proposes marriage. Jane accepts, then tells Calvert. Believing that she had double-crossed him to take advantage of the "millionaire" herself, Calvert has one of his henchmen hold her prisoner while he informs Lloyd that she had changed her mind about marrying him. Lloyd, peeved, accepts Calvert's invitation to "a little game." Meanwhile Jane escapes and, to break up the game, starts a riot on the dance floor. Lloyd, who had been permitted to win the first few games, grabs his winnings and dashes to the street, where Joan tells him of what Jane had done. He rushes back into the dance hall in time to save her from Calvert's wrath. His thirty-six-hour pass at an end, Lloyd gives Jane his winnings for her sick friend and heads back to camp with Scott, both promising to resume their romances after the war.

Morton Grant wrote the screen play, Michel Kraike produced it, and Will Jason directed it. The cast includes George McKay and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"A Guy, a Gal and a Pal" with Lynn Merrick  
and Ross Hunter**

(Columbia, March 8; time, 61 min.)

Just a mildly entertaining romantic comedy, the sort that should serve its purpose as the lower-half of a mid-week double bill in secondary theatres. It has been given an unpretentious production, and there is not one new twist to the time-worn, implausible story, which revolves around a young couple who pose as man and wife when the young lady finds herself in need of assistance. Several of the situations are amusing, but for the most part the farcical complications that occur are quite familiar. It may, however, give

satisfaction to those who are not too particular about story material:—

Accompanied by Ted Donaldson, her nephew, Lynn Merrick goes to the Los Angeles depot to board a train for Washington, D. C., where she intended to marry George Meeker, a wealthy socialite. She learns to her dismay that her tickets had not been reserved, and she permits Ross Hunter, a Marine, to obtain reservations for her by agreeing to pose as his wife. En route, Lynn learns that Hunter was a war hero, and that he was on his way to Washington to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor from the President. Complications arise when a General traveling on the train recognizes Hunter and insists that he and his "wife" spend the night in his drawing room. On the following morning, Lynn, Hunter and Ted get off the train at a small stop to stretch their legs, only to find themselves stranded when the train pulls out without them. To get to Washington for their respective appointments, they buy an old car, but it soon breaks down and they lose their way. They eventually reach a small town, where the Mayor, recognizing Hunter, arranges for them to fly to Washington. Arriving there, Hunter discovers that he was expected to bring his "wife" with him to the President. Meanwhile Lynn has a quarrel with Meeker who, through newspaper publicity, had learned of her trip with Hunter and misunderstood the circumstances. Peeved at Meeker's insinuations and realizing that her heart was with Hunter, Lynn breaks her engagement and rushes to Hunter's hotel suite. Both are married in time for them to get to the White House for the presentation.

Monte Brice wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Oscar Boetticher, Jr., directed it. The cast includes Jack Norton, Russell Hicks and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES**

(Continued from last page)

**Paramount**

"Hail the Conquering Hero": Good  
"Take it Big": Fair  
"Henry Aldrich's Little Secret": Fair  
"I Love a Soldier": Fair  
"Sign of the Cross" (reissue): Fair  
"Rainbow Island": Good-Fair  
"Till We Meet Again": Fair  
"National Barn Dance": Fair  
"Our Hearts Were Young and Gay": Good-Fair  
"Dark Mountain": Poor  
"And Now Tomorrow": Very Good-Good  
"The Man in Half Moon Street": Fair-Poor  
"Frenchman's Creek": Good  
"One Body Too Many": Fair-Poor  
"Ministry of Fear": Fair  
"Here Come the Waves": Very Good  
"Dangerous Passage": Fair-Poor  
"Practically Yours": Fair  
"Double Exposure": Fair  
"Bring on the Girls": Good  
"The Unseen": Fair  
"Salty O'Rourke": Very Good  
"High Powered": Fair-Poor

Twenty-three pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 10; Fair-Poor, 4; Poor, 1.



**RKO**

"Gildersleeve's Ghost": Fair  
 "Marine Raiders": Good-Fair  
 "A Night of Adventure": Fair  
 "Step Lively": Good-Fair  
 "Youth Runs Wild": Poor  
 "Snow White & the 7 Dwarfs" (reissue): Good  
 "The Falcon in Mexico": Fair  
 "Music in Manhattan": Fair  
 "Mme. Fifi": Fair-Poor  
 "Bride By Mistake": Good  
 "Heavenly Days": Good-Fair  
 "None but the Lonely Heart": Fair  
 "The Master Race": Fair  
 "Tall in the Saddle": Good  
 "Goin' to Town": Poor  
 "My Pal, Wolf": Fair  
 "The Girl Rush": Fair  
 "The Falcon in Hollywood": Fair  
 "Murder My Sweet": Good  
 "Nevada": Fair  
 "Experiment Perilous": Good-Fair  
 "The Princess and the Pirate": Good  
 "Casanova Brown": Good  
 "Woman in the Window": Very Good-Good  
 "Belle of the Yukon": Fair  
 "It's a Pleasure": Good  
 "The Three Caballeros": Fair  
 "What a Blonde": Fair  
 "Betrayal from the East": Fair  
 "Pan Americana": Fair  
 "Having a Wonderful Crime": Fair  
 "The Enchanted Cottage": Very Good-Good

Thirty-two pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 7; Good-Fair, 4; Fair, 16; Fair-Poor, 1; Poor, 2.

**20th Century-Fox**

"Roger Touhy, Gangster": Fair-Poor  
 "Candlelight in Algeria": Fair  
 "Home in Indiana": Very Good  
 "Take it or Leave it": Good-Fair  
 "Wing and a Prayer": Good  
 "Sweet and Lowdown": Fair  
 "Dangerous Journey": Fair  
 "Greenwich Village": Good  
 "Wilson": Good  
 "In the Meantime, Darling": Fair  
 "Irish Eyes are Smiling": Very Good  
 "Laura": Good  
 "Something for the Boys": Good  
 "Winged Victory": Very Good  
 "Sunday Dinner for a Soldier": Fair  
 "Keys of the Kingdom": Very Good-Good  
 "The Fighting Lady": Very Good-Good  
 "Hangover Square": Fair  
 "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn": Very Good  
 "Thunderhead—Son of Flicka": Very Good  
 "Circumstantial Evidence": Fair-Poor  
 "The Song of Bernadette": Good  
 "A Royal Scandal": Good-Fair  
 "Molly and Me": Fair

Twenty-four pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good, 5; Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 6; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 7; Fair-Poor, 2.

**United Artists**

"Sensations of 1945": Fair  
 "Summer Storm": Fair  
 "Abroad with Two Yanks": Good-Fair

"Since You Went Away": Very Good  
 "Dark Waters": Fair  
 "3 Is a Family": Fair  
 "Guest in the House": Fair  
 "Tomorrow the World": Fair  
 "I'll be Seeing You": Very Good  
 "Mr. Emmanuel": Fair-Poor  
 "Delightfully Dangerous": Fair  
 "Brewster's Millions": Fair

Twelve pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good, 2; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 8; Fair-Poor, 1.

**Universal**

"South of Dixie": Poor  
 "Christmas Holiday": Good  
 "Jungle Woman": Fair-Poor  
 "The Mummy's Ghost": Fair-Poor  
 "Twilight on the Prairie": Fair-Poor  
 "Allergic to Love": Fair-Poor  
 "In Society": Good  
 "Gypsy Wildcat": Good-Fair  
 "Moonlight and Cactus": Fair  
 "The Merry Monahans": Good-Fair  
 "The Pearl of Death": Fair  
 "San Diego, I Love You": Good-Fair  
 "The Singing Sheriff": Fair  
 "Babes on Swing Street": Fair  
 "The Climax": Fair  
 "Bowery to Broadway": Fair  
 "Dead Man's Eyes": Fair-Poor  
 "Reckless Age": Fair  
 "Enter Arsene Lupin": Good-Fair  
 "Murder in the Blue Room": Fair  
 "Hi' Beautiful": Fair  
 "My Gal Loves Music": Fair  
 "Destiny": Fair  
 "Can't Help Singing": Very Good-Good  
 "Night Club Girl": Fair  
 "She Gets Her Man": Fair  
 "Under Western Skies": Fair-Poor  
 "The Suspect": Good  
 "Here Come the Co-Eds": Good  
 "Her Lucky Night": Fair  
 "House of Frankenstein": Fair  
 "The Mummy's Curse": Fair  
 "Frisco Sal": Good-Fair  
 "Sudan": Fair

Thirty-four pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good, 1; Good, 4; Good-Fair, 5; Fair, 17; Fair-Poor, 6; Poor, 1.

**Warner Brothers**

"The Mask of Dimitrios": Good-Fair  
 "The Adventures of Mark Twain": Fair  
 "Mr. Skeffington": Very Good-Good  
 "Janie": Very Good-Good  
 "Crime by Night": Fair-Poor  
 "Arsenic and Old Lace": Very Good  
 "The Last Ride": Fair-Poor  
 "The Conspirators": Fair  
 "The Very Thought of You": Good  
 "The Doughgirls": Good-Fair  
 "Hollywood Canteen": Very Good  
 "To Have and Have Not": Very Good  
 "Objective Burma": Very Good-Good  
 "Roughly Speaking": Good  
 "Hotel Berlin": Good  
 "God is My Co-Pilot": Very Good-Good

Sixteen pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good, 3; Very Good-Good, 4; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 2.

and its attitude is bound to result in a lack of confidence in the company on the part of, not only the exhibitors who bought the picture, but also others.

As Allied has stated, the presence of a Clark Gable reissue in any group of pictures was undoubtedly an incentive for the exhibitor to sign for the group, and we might add that, in a good many cases, it probably was a controlling factor in inducing the exhibitor to agree to the terms asked for the other pictures in the group. Many exhibitors, before concluding deals, consider the box-office worth of the group as a whole. By omitting "Call of the Wild" from the approved contracts, it is reasonable to assume that Twentieth Century-Fox caused the box-office worth of a particular group to lessen, perhaps to the extent that lower rental terms might have been agreed upon for the remaining pictures of the group. Accordingly, HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that any exhibitor who signed for the entire group, and was denied "Call of the Wild" has good cause to ask for an adjustment, provided that the deal he made was in any way affected by the withholding of this reissue. And unless Twentieth Century-Fox can satisfactorily explain its action, such adjustments should be granted.

\* \* \*

While Twentieth Century-Fox owes an explanation to the exhibitors who bought "Call of the Wild," it owes an explanation also to every other exhibitor, for its use of the raw stock that has gone into the making of the prints, which, in the midst of the greatest shortage of feature prints the industry has ever experienced, are reposing and gathering dust on the shelves of the exchanges.

This paper has many times stated that the War Production Board should formulate rules and regulations to control the disposition of raw stock allocated to the producer-distributors. We maintained (and still do) that the exhibitors have an equity in the available raw stock during these critical times, and that the producer-distributors' stranglehold on exhibition would be tightened unless steps were taken to protect that equity.

But Mr. Stanley Adams, chief of the Consumers Durable Goods Division of the WPB, under whose supervision raw stock is allocated to the industry, has done nothing to recognize the exhibitors' stake in raw stock, despite his promise that his division would protect the equities of exhibition.

What better proof does Mr. Adams need of the fallacy of his Division's method of raw stock control than the present instance of Twentieth Century-Fox's use of thousands of feet of this valuable stock for prints of a reissue, which remain on shelves while the available print supply on new features is scarcely enough to meet the exhibitors' needs?

And what about the fact that the indiscriminate use of raw stock for prints of reissues, which many exhibitors may not care to re-book, because of excessive rental demands, deprives them of badly needed prints on new features?

Yes, Mr. Adams. What about it?

## BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES

(The previous box-office performances were printed in the August 19, 1944 issue:

### Columbia

"They Live in Fear": Fair-Poor  
 "She's a Soldier, Too": Fair-Poor  
 "Louisiana Hayride": Fair  
 "Secret Command": Fair  
 "U-Boat Prisoner": Fair-Poor  
 "Mr. Winkle Goes to War": Good-Fair  
 "Cry of the Werewolf": Poor  
 "Soul of a Monster": Poor  
 "Kansas City Kitty": Fair  
 "The Impatient Years": Good-Fair  
 "Ever Since Venus": Fair  
 "One Mysterious Night": Fair-Poor  
 "Carolina Blues": Poor  
 "Strange Affair": Fair  
 "Meet Miss Bobby Socks": Poor  
 "Shadows in the Night": Fair-Poor  
 "The Unwritten Code": Poor  
 "Mark of the Whistler": Fair  
 "Sergeant Mike": Fair-Poor  
 "The Missing Juror": Fair-Poor  
 "She's a Sweetheart": Fair-Poor  
 "Dancing in Manhattan": Fair-Poor  
 "Together Again": Good-Fair  
 "Tahiti Nights": Fair-Poor  
 "Let's Go Steady": Poor  
 "Youth on Trial": Poor  
 "Eadie Was a Lady": Fair  
 "I Love a Mystery": Fair-Poor  
 "Tonight and Every Night": Good  
 "Leave it to Blondie": Fair  
 "Crime Doctor's Courage": Fair  
 "A Guy, A Gal, and a Pal": Fair-Poor  
 "A Song to Remember": Very good-Good  
 "Rough, Tough and Ready": Fair

Thirty-four pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 10; Fair-Poor, 12; Poor, 7.

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"Bathing Beauty": Good  
 "The Canterville Ghost": Good  
 "The White Cliffs of Dover": Very Good  
 "The Seventh Cross": Good  
 "Barbary Coast Gent": Good-Fair  
 "Waterloo Bridge" (reissue): Fair  
 "Maisie Goes to Reno": Good-Fair  
 "Marriage is a Private Affair": Good-Fair  
 "Kismet": Good  
 "Mrs. Parkington": Very Good  
 "Naughty Marietta" (reissue): Good  
 "Lost in a Harem": Good-Fair  
 "Dragon Seed": Very Good-Good  
 "An American Romance": Fair  
 "The Thin Man Goes Home": Good-Fair  
 "Main Street After Dark": Fair  
 "Music for Millions": Good  
 "Blonde Fever": Fair-Poor  
 "This Man's Navy": Fair  
 "Between Two Women": Good  
 "Nothing but Trouble": Fair  
 "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo": Excellent-Very Good  
 "Meet Me in St. Louis": Excellent  
 "Keep Your Powder Dry": Good  
 "National Velvet": Very Good

Twenty-five pictures have been checked with the following results:

Excellent, 1; Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 3; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 8; Good-Fair, 5; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor 1.

(Continued on page 74)



Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

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Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING****Vol. XXVII****SATURDAY, MAY 19, 1945****No. 20****A CHANGE IS AT HAND**

Now that the European phase of the war is over, the time has come for every one of you to do some rational thinking and to take stock of the present and future economic state of the nation; some careful thought now may save you many a headache afterwards.

While the war still to be fought in the Pacific will undoubtedly maintain business revenues at a level high above normal, the defeat of Germany has reduced sharply the requirements for implements of war, and it should be expected that, from now on, income payments to individuals will decline steadily as a result of contract cutbacks, elimination of overtime work, and the general shift of labor to industries paying lower wages. There is also the matter of unemployment during the period of industrial reconversion. Moreover, the early collapse of Japan, because of the overwhelming power now bearing down on her, is quite within the realm of possibility and, should this come about, its suddenness may serve to create vast areas of unemployment, which peacetime industries, pending reconversion, may not be able to absorb for many months.

The situation is summed up well by Mr. Harvey E. Runner, Business News Editor of the *New York Herald Tribune*, who had this to say in the Sunday, May 13 issue of that paper:

"Now that we are in the transition period between two great wars, the plan of reshaping our national economy to a whole set of new conditions is upon us. The period just ahead, in so far as it affects industry, will be one of half peace, half war. It will compare with no like period in the nation's history and, therefore, the path to be followed will be uncharted. . . .

"While supplies for civilians may be at a low ebb today, war needs right along held the national economy at high levels. They boosted industrial activity, employment, income payments to individuals, consumer expenditures, savings of individuals and many other factors in our economy to new all-time peaks.

"But now a change is at hand. The statistical peaks have been passed and the new trend is downward. Industrial production is under its high point and a further sliding off is seen through the summer. Employment likewise is expected to fall, as cutbacks on war orders take their toll. It naturally follows that income payments to individuals will drop and that the rate of gain in savings will decline and perhaps cease. Consumer expenditures cannot help being affected by such developments. . . .

"Business cannot convert from war to peace and hold at present levels. . . . What is about to happen represents an inevitable recession from the abnormal peaks reached under the war-time stimulation of our economy."

The transition from a war economy to a peace economy, without even considering the possibility of a sudden collapse of Japan, may result in an unemployment figure of two and one-half million by the end of twelve months, according to a report by Fred M. Vinson, Director of War Mobilization and Reconversion. This figure seems conservative when one considers that, within the twelve-month period, more than two million men will receive discharges from the armed forces. And you might add to this number hundreds of thousands of civilian employees in Government service whose dismissal will be gradual. As a matter of fact, the National Civil Service League, in a report made public last week, has recommended that one and one-half million civilian Government workers be dismissed after the war in a reorganization of the public services.

Although the officials in Washington will undoubtedly make every effort to bring about this transition with the least possible disruption to the national economy, a business decline cannot be escaped. For this reason, it is necessary for every one of you to exercise the greatest of care as to the prices you pay for film rental. The producer-distributors, realizing that a recession is on, may try to excite you into buying their pictures early. And if you rush to do so, you may agree to deals that will compel you later to dip into your bank reserve, if you have one, to meet your film bills.

Despite the many statements to the contrary, the quality of pictures this season has been generally poor, and there is nothing to indicate that during the coming season there will be an improvement. You cannot, of course, tell the producers that the quality of their pictures is poor, because, in their usual short-sighted manner, they will refute your claim by pointing to the abnormal grosses. But the sensible exhibitor knows that this is a fallacious answer, for, in most instances, the abnormal grosses attained by poor quality pictures must be attributed to a free-spending, pent-up public, whose crave for relaxation, with little time to enjoy it, has made them not-too-choosy. With the return of normalcy, however, and with the public's pocketbook comparatively deflated, and with more leisure time to spare, picture-going patrons will once again become discriminating about their screen entertainment and, consequently, the mediocre pictures will earn only their worth.

Make up your mind that the business prospect for the future, though not black, is far from the glowing war-time prosperity of today; unemployment will increase, and overtime earnings will be cut. And though there may be some reduction in the tax rates, it will not compensate for the lowered learning power of the public. As a result of these conditions, the picture-going ranks are bound to be thinned.

(Continued on last page)

### **"That's the Spirit" with Jack Oakie and Peggy Ryan**

(Universal, June 15; time, 92 min.)

This is a pleasant blend of comedy, fantasy, sentiment and music, which, despite a number of slow spots, should satisfy most picture-goers pretty well. The theme of a person dying and then returning to earth to mingle with mortals who cannot see him is not novel, but it has been handled well and, with the aid of expert trick photography, has some unusually good comedy situations. Moreover, the music is tuneful and pleasing to the ear, and the dancing, particularly as executed by Johnny Coy, a newcomer, is outstanding. Most of the comedy is provoked by Jack Oakie, as the affable spirit, who, using a magic flute, influences those who cannot see or hear him to do his bidding. The scenes in which he makes his pompous father-in-law behave in a ridiculous manner should draw howls of laughter:—

Gene Lockhart, a Victorian-minded, influential banker, completely dominates his wife (Edith Barrett) and his daughter (June Vincent). Rebelling against his tyranny and stuffiness, June meets and falls in love with Oakie, a vaudevillian, whose profession Lockhart despised. Lockhart tries to break up their love, but June, leading him to believe that she had been compromised, tricks him into compelling Oakie to marry her. On the day June gives birth to a daughter, a strange, beautiful woman accosts Oakie and compels him to follow her. Immediately after, he is killed in an accident, and his spirit is taken to heaven by the strange woman. Oakie goes to the Complaint Department, headed by Buster Keaton, and requests to be returned to the Earth so that he could explain to his wife that he did not run off with another woman. Keaton refuses his request, but after eighteen years, when he learns that Lockhart was dominating Peggy Ryan, Oakie's daughter, he grants Oakie permission to spend a week on Earth. Arriving, Oakie remains invisible to all but Peggy, who was able to see him because of her blood tie. He induces Peggy to keep his presence a secret, and influences her to become a dancer in a theatre owned by Andy Devine, his former partner. Lockhart, furious, determines to halt her career, and he uses his financial power to close the show. But Oakie, by using his magic flute, influences Lockhart's wife to defy her husband and to finance the show. Meanwhile Oakie's wife, who had been ill, is visited by the beautiful messenger of death. Her spirit joins Oakie's spirit, and together they watch their daughter score a huge success on opening night.

Michael Fessier and Ernest Pagano wrote the screen play and produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it. The cast includes Arthur Treacher, Irene Ryan, Victoria Horne and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Honeymoon Ahead" with Allan Jones and Grace McDonald**

(Universal, May 11; time, 59 min.)

A moderately entertaining romantic comedy, with music. The performances are superior to the story, which is thin and somewhat silly. A few situations here and there are amusing enough to provoke laughs, but the plot developments are routine and obvious, causing one to lose interest in the outcome. The brisk

action, however, and the pleasant song numbers, are compensating factors, and they should help the picture to get by as the lower half of a double bill wherever audiences are not too concerned about story material:—

Allan Jones, unjustly sentenced for a bank robbery, is pardoned. His release from jail upsets the prison choir, which he led; the members plot to get him back with the aid of Jack Overman, an ex-convict. Hitchhiking home, Jones is given a lift by Raymond Walburn, head of a struggling stock company, who offers him a job with the troupe. Jones promises to join him after spending a few days in Oaks Corners, his home town. That night, two of Overman's henchmen rob the Oaks Corners National Bank of \$10,000 and manage to conceal the money in the lining of Jones' suitcase. The following morning, after Jones' sudden departure, the robbery is discovered, placing him under suspicion. Overman, learning what his henchmen had done, orders them to get back the money lest Jones be caught and sent to the wrong jail. Meanwhile Jones joins the troupe and falls in love with Grace McDonald, Walburn's daughter. Grace learns of his past and has a misunderstanding with him, but she soon becomes convinced of his innocence. Jones first learns that he was suspected of the bank robbery when he receives word that two bank detectives were on their way to arrest him. Lest they arrest him before he can clear himself, Jones dons a disguise on the stage. Both the detectives and the gangsters arrive at the theatre at the same time and, in a series of incidents in which Jones loses his disguise and is kidnapped by the thieves, he manages to gain the upper hand, capturing them, recovering the money, and clearing his name.

Val Burton and Elwood Ullman wrote the screen play, Will Cowan produced it, and Reginald Le Borg directed it. The cast includes Vivian Austin, Murray Alper, Eddie Acuff, John Abbott and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Penthouse Rhythm" with Kirby Grant, Lois Collier and Judy Clark**

(Universal, June 22; time, 60 min.)

Just passable. Like the majority of Universal's program comedies with music, this one will serve to round out a double bill without making too much of an impression on the audience. In spite of the fact that the action is fast-moving, it is difficult for one to remain interested in the proceedings, for the story is hackneyed, silly, and tiresome. It has a few musical interludes, of the "jive" variety, which should please the "jitterbug" set. The routine romance is of little help to the picture:—

Desiring a stage career, Judy Clark and her three brothers quit their jobs when they learn that Lois Collier, their friend and secretary to Edward Norris, a theatrical producer, had arranged for him to audition their act. Norris, however, leaves town without seeing them; he had become involved in a law suit with Marion Martin, a chorus girl, and Kirby Grant, his attorney, had advised him to leave town until he could arrange a settlement with Donald McBride, Marion's attorney. Lois, to help Judy and her brothers, moves them into Norris' swank apartment so that they might put up a "front" and meet the right people in show business. When Grant unexpectedly visits



the apartment and finds Judy there, Lois, to explain Judy's presence, introduces her as "Marion." Grant, seizing an opportunity to settle Norris' legal mess, talks Judy into dropping the suit, provided he takes care of her theatrical ambitions. He decides to give a party at Norris' apartment in Judy's honor as a means of introducing her to the right people. When McBride visits him to arrange a settlement, Grant informs him of his deal with "Marion." McBride, puzzled, confronts Marion, and for the first time both learn that Judy was impersonating her; they decide to attend the party to expose her. Norris adds to the confusion by returning to town unexpectedly. All meet at the party, where Marion, calling Judy an imposter, starts a free-for-all fight. The police take every one to jail, where Grant, employing his legal tactics, accuses Marion of blackmail and compels her to drop the suit. It all ends with Norris growing romantic over Judy, and with his launching her and her brothers on a theatrical career.

Stanley Roberts and Howard Dimisdale wrote the screen play, Frank Gross produced it, and Edward Cline directed it. The cast includes Ed Brophy, Henry Armetta, Eric Blore and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Trouble Chasers" with Billy Gilbert, Shemp Howard and Maxie Rosenbloom**

(Monogram, no release date set; time, 63 min.)

A switch of the title to "Audience Chaser" would be more appropriate for this program comedy; it is incredibly poor. Some stories, though nonsensical, manage to be humorous, but this one is so inane, and what passes for comedy is so forced, that it is doubtful if even the most ardent picture-goer will have the patience to sit through to the end. This is the third picture in which Billy Gilbert, Shemp Howard and Maxie Rosenbloom have been featured as a comedy trio and, in the opinion of this reviewer, the quality of the series has gone from bad to worse. The pity of it is that the performers, who are capable of handling comedy material, are wasted; as hard as they try, they cannot overcome the silliness of the story:—

Under the pen name of "Black Panther," Billy Gilbert, publicity man for Maxie Rosenbloom, a down-and-out prizefighter managed by Shemp Howard, writes a fictitious account of a \$50,000 jewel theft, based on the experiences of Carlyle Blackwell, Jr., a young taxi driver who, though innocent, had served a prison term because a paste duplicate of the jewels had been found in his cab. I. Stanford Jolly and Wheeler Oakman, members of the gang that had committed the theft, read Gilbert's story and come to the conclusion that he knew who had the real jewels. Gilbert, frightened by their threats, pacifies them by promising to produce the real jewels. The gangsters become a constant threat to Gilbert, Howard and Rosenbloom by moving into their boarding house to make sure that Gilbert fulfills his promise. Complications arise when Barbara Pepper, another member of the gang, who had the jewels in her possession, gives them to Gilbert for safekeeping lest her confederates discover her secret and kill her. Gilbert, fearing for his own safety, tries desperately to get rid of the jewels. The gangsters, impatient with Gilbert, finally corner him in a night club and take the gems. But the police, led by an insurance detective who had been

masquerading as a boarder, arrive in time to capture the thieves, thus clearing Blackwell's name.

George Plympton and Ande Lamb wrote the screen play, Sam Katzman and Jack Dietz produced it, and Lew Landers directed it. The cast includes Gloria Marlen, Emmett Lynn, Patsy Moran and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Pillow to Post" with Ida Lupino, William Prince and Sydney Greenstreet**

(Warner Bros., June 9; time, 92 min.)

In spite of the fact that it lacks a substantial plot, this comedy-farce is, for the most part, fairly amusing, mainly because of the performances by the competent cast. Adapted from the stage play, "Pillar to Post," the story deals with the complications a pretty travelling saleswoman and a young army lieutenant get themselves into when she persuades the young man, a total stranger, to pose as her husband so that she could obtain sleeping quarters in a crowded town. The farcical situations that result are familiar but the events leading up to them are laugh-provoking and, since the action is breezy all the way through, one's interest is held pretty well. Ida Lupino, as the heroine, shows a good flair for comedy:—

Learning that her father, owner of an oil well supply company, was short of salesmen, Ida persuades him to let her represent the firm on some important deals. She goes to a booming California town, near a large army base, only to find that living quarters were unavailable. Ruth Donnelly, manager of an auto court, mistakes her for an army bride and offers to rent her a bungalow. Desperate for a place to sleep, Ida indicates that she was married and sets out to pick up an officer so that she could register. She meets Lieut. William Prince, who reluctantly agrees to help her. Complications set in when the "newlyweds" run into Colonel Sydney Greenstreet, Prince's commanding officer, who lived at the auto court with his wife (Barbara Brown). Prince, confused, is compelled to introduce Ida as his wife or face the consequences of a court martial for conduct unbecoming an officer. Greenstreet, pleased with the "marriage," caters to the young couple and unwittingly compels them to spend the night together in the bungalow. Additional complications ensue when Johnny Mitchell, manager of an oil company, from which Ida sought to obtain an order, insists that Ida accompany him on a date before signing the order; the other army wives at the auto court suspect her of being unfaithful to Prince. The young couple determine to get out of their predicament by staging a quarrel and pretending to get a "divorce," but Greenstreet interferes and virtually orders Prince to make up with his "wife." Meanwhile both had fallen in love. More complications ensue when Ida, invited to dinner at the Colonel's home, becomes intoxicated and reveals the truth. Greenstreet, astounded, threatens to court martial Prince, but when he becomes convinced that nothing wrong had happened, he gives the young couple his blessing as they drive off to make their marriage legal.

Charles Hoffman wrote the screen play, Alex Gottlieb produced it, and Vincent Sherman directed it. The cast includes Stuart Erwin, Willie Best, Paul Harvey, Louis Armstrong and his Orchestra and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

To cite one example of why you should exercise care now in your picture-buying, let me remind you of the depression in the early 1930's when the large circuits cut down their admission prices to increase their falling patronage. This move, of course, hurt the independent exhibitors, for when they signed their contracts they figured the prices they would pay for film in accordance with the admission prices that they and their competitors were charging. When their competitors reduced admission prices, the independents were compelled to carry a burden they had not foreseen. They found that, if they did not lower their prices, they lost patronage, and if they did lower the prices, the reduced box-office receipts were much too low in comparison with the prices they had paid for the film. This example points out but one of the possibilities you must now take into consideration.

Lest some of you gain the impression that I am predicting another depression in the near future, let me hasten to assure you that such is not my intent. I firmly believe that prosperity will be with us for some time to come, but not at the level we are enjoying presently. That is why I am urging you to watch your film buying and to seek rental reductions proportionate with the future drop in box-office receipts.

Buy your pictures carefully. Don't rush! Give yourself a few days to study the contract before you sign it. A little thought and patience now may save you, as already said, many headaches afterwards.

### THE OUTLOOK FOR THEATRE CONSTRUCTION

According to a statement issued last week by the War Production Board's Office of Civilian Requirements, there is little prospect of new theatre construction in the immediate future.

The OCR stated that "no available facilities exist for the manufacture of theatre seats and textile coverings, or motion picture equipment for commercial use." It added that "former manufacturers of chairs and seats are now occupied with war work, and although production of projection and sound equipment is at its highest peak since 1941, it is sufficient only to meet requirements of the Armed Forces.

"With a partial replacement of civilian theatre equipment damaged or destroyed by fire, no reservoir of production or supply exists from which new civilian theatres can be equipped."

It was explained also that critical shortages in certain building materials, and lack of manpower in many areas, were additional factors that now prevent the WPB from authorizing new theatre construction.

The purpose of the statement was to stop the increasing number of applications for permission to build new theatres from persons who are under the impression that the relaxation of certain WPB controls makes it possible for them to put their building plans into operation at once.

Although new theatre building may be barred for the immediate future, there is every reason to believe that it will not be for long. Perhaps a few months. The wheels are already in motion for a changeover from a war-time economy to a peacetime economy, and it should be expected that building materials now on the critical list will soon be available for civilian needs. The WPB has already relaxed restrictions on the use of steel, copper and aluminum, and the War Manpower Commission has announced that, beginning July 1, regulations covering workers who were

"frozen" to their jobs will be lifted in many areas throughout the country, leaving them free to seek other employment. The relaxation of these war-time controls will, of course, hasten the theatre building program.

As pointed out in an editorial that appeared in the November 11, 1944 issue of this paper, the time to control theatre building is now. The prosperity that people of this country have enjoyed during the last few years has enabled many of them to accumulate sizeable bank accounts and, now that the trend is back to normalcy, many individuals are shopping around for enterprises that will give them post-war security.

The motion picture theatre, to those who are unacquainted with show business operations, seems to be a lucrative business. And one can hardly blame them for being impressed, because the fantastic salaries paid to picture people in Hollywood, and the tremendous dollar grosses that are publicized in both the daily and trade papers, are enough to make any one's head swim. If one could only convince these people of the pitfalls in our business, and of the monopolistic conditions under which independent exhibitors are compelled to operate, they might think twice before investing their money. But in most cases such an approach by an exhibitor to a prospective exhibitor would be looked upon with suspicion; he might feel that he was being talked out of a "good thing."

Yet the fact remains that a surge of indiscriminate theatre building on the part of, not only newcomers, but also those in the business, without regard for a community's ability to support more than a given number of theatres, threatens to undermine the orderly conduct of the exhibition business. Competition can often be beneficial, but "over-seating" is usually disastrous to all concerned.

Established exhibitors seeking some measure of protection can do something about this impending condition before it is too late.

In the aforementioned November 11 issue, I reproduced an ordinance adopted by the City Council of Winchester, Kentucky, on February 19, 1937, regulating the operation of motion picture theatres and other similar places of public entertainment within the city limits. This ordinance was modeled after a proposed ordinance drafted by my attorney a number of years ago, prescribing the conditions under which new theatres might be built, and it is designed to protect the established exhibitor. It is an effective ordinance because, unlike others, which limit the number of theatres in accordance with the number of inhabitants, thus leaving their constitutionality doubtful, this one is predicated on the police powers of the local governing body, and would thus have a better chance of being upheld if challenged in the courts.

Those who have copies of the November 11, 1944 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS may extract that ordinance and present it to the city councils for action; those who have misplaced their copies may apply to this office for another copy.

Now is the time for action, before the reckless surge of theatre building gets under way. You must not permit yourself to become complacent merely because building operations are still under strict control. The restrictions may be lifted momentarily. Then it will be too late for preventative measures. Remember that you cannot build a dam while the flood waters are rushing in.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXVII

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 19, 1945

No. 20

(Partial Index No. 3—Pages 54 to 76 Incl.)

Titles of Pictures	Reviewed on Page
Bells of Rosarita—Republic (68 min.)	not reviewed
Blood on the Sun—United Artists (94 min.)	67
Boston Blackie Booked on Suspicion—Columbia (67 min.)	62
Brighton Strangler, The—RKO (67 min.)	70
Bullfighters, The—20th Century-Fox (61 min.)	60
China Sky—RKO (78 min.)	62
China's Little Devils—Monogram (74 min.)	55
Corpus Christi Bandits—Republic (55 min.)	not reviewed
Counter-Attack—Columbia (90 min.)	56
Diamond Horseshoe—20th Century-Fox (104 min.)	59
Escape in the Desert—Warner Bros. (79 min.)	66
Fighting Guardsman, The—Columbia (84 min.)	70
Flame of the Barbary Coast—Republic (91 min.)	63
Guy, a Gal and a Pal, A—Columbia (61 min.)	74
Hitchhike to Happiness—Republic (72 min.)	67
Horn Blows at Midnight, The—Warner Bros. (78 min.)	56
Identity Unknown—Republic (71 min.)	55
I'll Remember April—Universal (63 min.)	58
In Old New Mexico—Monogram (62 min.)	not reviewed
Lady Confesses, The—PRC (65 min.)	56
Medal for Benny, A—Paramount (77 min.)	59
Missing Corpse, The—PRC (62 min.)	71
Muggs Rides Again—Monogram (64 min.)	66
Murder, He Says—Paramount (91 min.)	60
Patrick the Great—Universal (88 min.)	64
Phantom of 42nd Street—PRC (58 min.)	54
Phantom Speaks, The—Republic (68 min.)	64
Salome, Where She Danced—Universal (90 min.)	59
Scared Stiff—Paramount (63 min.)	60
Scarlet Clue, The—Monogram (64 min.)	55
Silver Fleet, The—PRC (77 min.)	54
Song of the Sarong—Universal (63 min.)	58
Son of Lassie—MGM (100 min.)	63
Southerner, The—United Artists (91 min.)	71
Swing Out, Sister—Universal (60 min.)	70
Ten Cents a Dance—Columbia (60 min.)	74
Those Endearing Young Charms—RKO (82 min.)	62
Two O'Clock Courage—RKO (66 min.)	54
Valley of Decision, The—MGM (118 min.)	58
Vampire's Ghost, The—Republic (59 min.)	64
Wonder Man—RKO (96 min.)	66
Zombies on Broadway—RKO (67 min.)	63

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

## Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

6039	Let's Go Steady—Parrish-Moran	Jan. 4
6041	Youth on Trial—Collins-Reed	Jan. 11
6014	Eadie Was a Lady—Miller-Besser	Jan. 18
6024	I Love a Mystery—Bannon-Foch	Jan. 25
6204	Sage Brush Heroes—Starrett (54 m.)	Feb. 1
6221	Sing Me a Song of Texas—Lane (66 m.)	Feb. 8
6002	Tonight and Every Night—Hayworth-Bowman	Feb. 22
6019	Leave it to Blondie—Lake-Singleton	Feb. 22
6017	Crime Doctor's Courage—Baxter-Crane	Feb. 27
6034	A Guy, A Gal and a Pal—Hunter-Merrick	Mar. 8
6205	Rough Ridin' Justice—Starrett (58 m.) (re.)	Mar. 15

6018	Rough, Tough and Ready—McLaglen-Morris	Mar. 22
6037	Escape in the Fog—Foch-Wright	Apr. 5
6026	Eve Knew Her Apples—Miller-Wright	Apr. 12
6222	Rockin' in the Rockies—Stooges-Hughes	Apr. 17
6023	Power of the Whistler—Dix-Carter	Apr. 19
6206	Return of the Durango Kid—Starrett	Apr. 19
	Counter-Attack—Muni-Chapman	Apr. 26
6031	Boston Blackie Booked on Suspicion—Morris	May 10
	Both Barrels Blazing—Charles Starrett (57 m.)	May 17
	The Fighting Guardsman—Parker-Louise	May 24
	Ten Cents a Dance—Frazee-Lloyd	June 7
	Rhythm Round-Up—Western musical	June 7
	Blonde from Brooklyn—Stanton-Merrick	June 21
	Special	
	A Song to Remember—Muni-Oberon	Mar. 1

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

## Block 10

513	The Thin Man Goes Home—Powell-Loy	January
514	Main Street After Dark—Arnold	January
515	Music for Millions—O'Brien-Allyson	February
516	Blonde Fever—Astor-Dorn	February
517	This Man's Navy—Beery-Drake	February
518	Between Two Women—Johnson-Barrymore	March
519	Nothing But Trouble—Laurel & Hardy	March
520	Keep Your Powder Dry—Peters-Turner-Day	March
	Block 11	
522	Without Love—Hepburn-Tracy	May
523	Gentle Annie—Craig-Reed	May
524	The Clock—Garland-Walker	May
525	The Picture of Dorian Gray—Sanders-Hatfield	June
526	Son of Lassie—Lawford-Crisp	June

## Specials

500	Dragon Seed—Hepburn-Huston	August
511	Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo—Tracy-Johnson	January
512	Meet Me in St. Louis—Garland-O'Brien	January
521	National Velvet—Rooney-Taylor	April
527	Valley of Decision—Garson-Peck	June

## Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

455	Navajo Trail—J. M. Brown (55 m.)	Jan. 5
414	Army Wives—Knox-Rambeau	Jan. 12
420	Adventures of Kitty O'Day—Parker-Cookson	Jan. 19
417	The Jade Mask—Sidney Toler	Jan. 26
401	Forever Yours—Storm-Brown (re.)	Jan. 26
429	The Cisco Kid Returns—Renaldo (64 m.) (re.)	Feb. 9
454	Gun Smoke—J. M. Brown (59 m.)	Feb. 16
422	There Goes Kelly—Moran-McKay (re.)	Feb. 16
402	Dillinger—Tierney-Lowe	Mar. 2
423	Fashion Model—Lowery-Weaver (re.)	Mar. 2
410	Docks of New York—East Side Kids (re.)	Mar. 9
406	G. I. Honeymoon—Storm-Cookson (re.)	Apr. 6
418	The Scarlet Clue—Sidney Toler (re.)	May 5
405	China's Little Devils—Carey-Kelly	May 12
	In Old New Mexico—Renaldo (62 m.)	May 19
	Flame of the West—Brown-Woodbury	May 26
	Divorce—Francis-Cabot	June 1
	Muggs Rides Again—East Side Kids	June 8
456	Stranger from Sante Fe—J. M. Brown (53 m.)	June 15

**Paramount Features**(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)  
(No national release dates)

## Block 3

- 4411 Here Come the Waves—Crosby-Hutton.....  
 4412 Dangerous Passage—Lowery-Brooks.....  
 4413 For Whom the Bell Tolls—Cooper-Bergman.....  
 4414 Practically Yours—Colbert-MacMurray.....  
 4415 Double Exposure—Morris-Kelly.....

## Block 4

- 4416 Bring on the Girls—Tufts-Bracken-Lake.....  
 4417 The Unseen—McCrear-Russell.....  
 4418 Salty O'Rourke—Ladd-Russell.....  
 4419 High Powered—Lowery-Brooks.....

## Block 5

- 4421 The Affairs of Susan—Fontaine-Brent.....  
 4422 Murder, He Says—MacMurray-Walker.....  
 4423 Scared Stiff—Haley-Savage.....  
 4424 A Medal for Benny—Lamour-DeCordova.....

## Special

- 4432 Sign of the Cross—Reissue.....

**PRC Pictures, Inc. Features**

(625 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

- 557 His Brother's Ghost—Buster Crabbe (56 m.)..Feb. 3  
 516 The Kid Sister—Pryor-Clark.....Feb. 6  
 554 Marked for Murder—Texas Rangers (58 m.)..Feb. 8  
 523 The Spell of Amy Nugent—English cast.....Feb. 10  
 508 Fog Island—Atwill-Zucco.....Feb. 15  
 507 The Man Who Walked Alone—O'Brien-Aldridge.....Mar. 15  
 517 Out of the Night—Lydon-William (Formerly "Strange Illusion").....Mar. 31  
 502 Crime, Inc.—Tilton-Neal.....Apr. 15  
 558 Shadows of Death—Buster Crabbe (56 m.)..Apr. 19  
 515 Hollywood & Vinc—Ellison-McKay.....Apr. 25  
 Phantom of 42nd St.—O'Brien-Aldridge.....May 2  
 Enemy of the Law—Texas Rangers (56 m.)..May 7  
 The Lady Confesses—Hughes-Beaumont.....May 16  
 The Missing Corpse—Bromberg-Jenks.....June 1  
 559 Gangsters' Den—Buster Crabbe (55 m.)....June 14  
 The Silver Fleet—English cast.....June 15  
 Three in the Saddle—Texas Rangers.....June 29

**Republic Features**

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

- 409 Grissley's Millions—Kelly-Grey.....Jan. 16  
 410 The Big Show-Off—Lake-Dale.....Jan. 22  
 464 The Topeka Terror—Lane-Stirling (55 m.)..Jan. 26  
 3317 Great Stage Coach Robbery—Elliott (56 m.)..Feb. 15  
 411 A Song for Miss Julie—Dolin-Markova....Feb. 19  
 454 Sheriff of Cimarron—Carson-Stirling (55m.)..Feb. 28  
 441 Utah—Roy Rogers (78 m.).....Mar. 21  
 412 The Great Flamarion—Von Stroheim-Hughes..Mar. 30  
 414 Identity Unknown—Arlen-Walker.....Apr. 2  
 413 Earl Carroll Vanities—O'Keefe-Moore.....Apr. 5  
 465 Corpus Christi Bandits—Lane-Watts (55 m.)..Apr. 20  
 433 The Phantom Speaks—Arlen-Ridges.....May 10  
 434 The Vampire's Ghost—Abbott-Stewart.....May 21  
 416 Three's a Crowd—Blake-Gordon.....May 23  
 415 Flame of the Barbary Coast—Wayne-Dvorak..May 28  
 442 Bells of Rosarita—Roy Rogers (68 m.)....June 19  
 417 The Chicago Kid—Barry-Roberts.....June 29  
 419 Hitchhike to Happiness—Pearce-Evans.....July 16  
 418 Steppin' in Society—Horton-George.....July 29

**RKO Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

## Block 3

- 511 What a Blonde—Errol-Borg.....  
 512 Betrayal from the East—Tracy-Kelly.....  
 513 Pan Americana—Terry-Arden.....  
 514 Having a Wonderful Crime—O'Brien-Landis.....  
 515 The Enchanted Cottage—Young-McGuire.....

## Block 4

- 516 Zombies on Broadway—Brown-Carney.....  
 517 The Body Snatcher—Karloff-Daniel.....  
 518 Tarzan and the Amazons—Weissmuller.....  
 519 China Sky—Scott-Warrick.....  
 520 Those Endearing Young Charms—Young-Day.....

## Block 5

- The Brighton Strangler—Loder-Duprez.....  
 Two O'Clock Courage—Conway-Rutherford.....  
 Back to Bataan—Wayne-Quinn.....  
 West of the Pecos—Mitchum-Hale.....  
 George White's Scandals—Haley-Davis.....

**Specials**

- 551 The Princess and the Pirate—Bob Hope.....  
 581 Casanova Brown—Cooper-Wright.....  
 582 Woman in the Window—Bennett-Robinson.....  
 583 Belle of the Yukon—Scott-Lee.....  
 584 It's a Pleasure—Henie-O'Shea.....  
 591 The Three Caballeros—Disney.....

**Twentieth Century-Fox Features**

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

(NOTE: Beginning with January, the practice of designating releases by blocks has been discontinued.)

- 514 Keys of the Kingdom—Peck-Mitchell.....January  
 515 The Fighting Lady—Documentary.....January  
 516 Hangover Square—Cregar-Darnell.....February  
 517 A Tree Grows in Brooklyn—McGuire-Dunn..February  
 518 Thunderhead—Son of Flicka—McDowall....March  
 519 Circumstantial Evidence—Nolan-O'Shea....March  
 520 The Song of Bernadette—Jennifer Jones.....April  
 521 A Royal Scandal—Bankhead-Eythe.....April  
 522 Molly and Me—Woolley-Fields.....April  
 524 Diamond Horseshoe—Grable-Haymes.....May  
 525 The Bullfighters—Laurel & Hardy.....May  
 526 Where Do We Go from Here—MacMurray-Leslie.....June

- 527 Don Juan Quilligan—Bendix-Blondell.....June  
 (NOTE: The Clark Gable reissue, "Call of the Wild," scheduled for April release, has been withdrawn.)

**United Artists Features**

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- Dark Waters—Oberon-Tone.....Nov. 10  
 3 Is a Family—Ruggles-Broderick.....Nov. 23  
 Guest in the House—Baxter-Bellamy.....Dec. 8  
 Tomorrow, the World—March-Field.....Dec. 29  
 I'll Be Seeing You—Rogers-Cotten-Temple.....Jan. 5  
 Mr. Emmanuel—English-made.....Jan. 19  
 Delightfully Dangerous—Powell-Moore.....Mar. 31  
 Brewster's Millions—O'Keefe-Walker.....Apr. 7  
 It's in the Bag—Fred Allen.....Apr. 21  
 Colonel Blimp—English cast.....May 4  
 Hold Autumn in Your Hand—Scott-Field.....May 18  
 The Great John L.—McClure-Darnell.....May 25

**Universal Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

- 9035 Night Club Girl—Austin-Norris.....Jan. 5  
 9020 She Gets Her Man—Davis-Errol.....Jan. 12  
 9039 Under Western Skies—O'Driscoll-Beery, Jr..Jan. 19  
 9010 The Suspect—Laughton-Raines.....Jan. 26  
 9002 Here Come the Co-Eds—Abbott-Costello....Feb. 2  
 9021 Her Lucky Night—Andrews Sisters.....Feb. 9  
 9013 House of Frankenstein—Karloff-Chaney....Feb. 16  
 9036 The Mummy's Curse—Lon Chaney.....Feb. 16  
 9012 Frisco Sal—Bey-Foster-Curtis.....Feb. 23  
 9006 Sudan—Montez-Bey-Hall.....Mar. 2  
 9025 The House of Fear—Rathbone-Bruce.....Mar. 16  
 9027 I'll Remember April—Jean-Grant.....Apr. 13  
 9040 Song of the Sarong—Gagan-Kelly.....Apr. 20  
 9073 Salome—Where She Danced—DeCarlo-Bruce.....Apr. 27  
 Patrick the Great—O'Connor-Ryan.....May 4  
 9028 Honeymoon Ahead—Jones-McDonald.....May 11  
 9033 Swing out Sister—Cameron-Treacher.....May 18  
 9016 See My Lawyer—Olsen & Johnson.....May 25  
 That's the Spirit—Oakie-Ryan (re.).....June 1  
 I'll Tell the World—Tracy-Preisser.....June 8  
 Blonde Ransom—Grey-Cook (re.).....June 15  
 Penthouse Rhythm—Collier-Grant.....June 22  
 The Frozen Ghost—Chaney-Ankers.....June 29  
 Jungle Captive—Kruger-Ward.....June 29  
 The Naughty Nineties—Abbott & Costello..July 6

**Warner Bros. Features**

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

- 410 To Have and Have Not—Bogart-Bacall.....Jan. 20  
 411 Objective Burma—Errol Flynn.....Feb. 17  
 412 Roughly Speaking—Russell-Carson.....Mar. 3  
 413 Hotel Berlin—Emerson-Dantine.....Mar. 17  
 414 God is My Co-Pilot—Morgan-Massey.....Apr. 7  
 415 The Horn Blows at Midnight—Jack Benny...Apr. 28  
 416 Escape in the Desert—Dorn-Dantine.....May 19  
 417 Pillow to Post—Lupino-Prince.....June 9  
 418 Conflict—Bogart-Smith.....June 30



**SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE****Columbia—One Reel**

6655	Community Sings No. 5 (9 m.)	Jan. 1
6501	Dog, Cat & Canary—Col. Rhap. (6 m.)	Jan. 5
6856	Screen Snapshots No. 6 (9 m.)	Jan. 26
6805	Kings of the Fairway—Sports (10 m.)	Feb. 2
6954	Korn Kobbler—Film Vodvil (11 m.)	Feb. 2
6656	Community Sings No. 6 (10 m.)	Feb. 9
6602	Kickapoo Juice—Li'l Abner (7 m.)	Feb. 23
6857	Screen Snapshots No. 7 (9 m.)	Feb. 25
6806	Rough and Tumble—Sports (9 m.)	Mar. 2
6657	Community Sings No. 7 (11 m.)	Mar. 15
6858	Screen Snapshots No. 8 (10 m.)	Mar. 29
6703	Goofy News Views—Phantasy (7 m.)	Apr. 27
6807	The Iron Master—Sports (9½ m.)	Apr. 27
6658	Community Sings No. 8 (9 m.)	Apr. 27
6752	The Egg Yegg—Fox & Crow (7½ m.) (re.)	May 4
6663	Victory Reel (V-E Day)	May 8
6955	Lowe, Hite & Stanley—Film Vodvil (11 m.)	May 11
6859	Screen Snapshots No. 9 (9½ m.)	May 17
6901	A Harbor Goes to France—Panoramic (10 m.)	May 18

6659	Community Sings No. 9 (10 m.)	May 25
6502	Rippling Romance—Col. Rhap. (8 m.) (re.)	June 21
6660	Community Sings No. 10	June 29
6808	Hi Ho Rodeo—Sports (re.)	July 6
6704	Booby Socks—Phantasy	July 12
6503	Fiesta Time—Col. Rhapsody (re.)	July 12
6753	Kukunuts—Fox & Crow (re.) (6½ m.)	July 26
6860	Screen Snapshots No. 10	July 27

**Columbia—Two Reels**

6410	Woo, Woo!—Hugh Herbert (16 m.)	Jan. 5
6403	Three Pests in a Mess—Stooges (15 m.)	Jan. 19
6140	Brenda Starr, Reporter (13 episodes)	Jan. 26
6430	Snooper Service—Brendel (14½ m.)	Feb. 2
6431	Off Again, On Again—Howard (16 m.)	Feb. 16
6404	Booby Dups—Stooges (17 m.)	Mar. 17
6432	Two Local Yokels—Clyde (re.) (17½ m.)	Mar. 23
6160	The Monster & the Ape (15 episodes)	Apr. 20
6433	Pistol Packin' Nitwits—Brendel (17 m.)	Apr. 4
6411	Wife Decoy—Hugh Herbert (17 m.)	June 1
6423	The Jury Goes Round 'N Round—Vera Vague (18 m.)	June 15
6405	Idiots Deluxe—Stooges (17½ m.)	July 20

**Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel****1943-44**

W-543	Screwy Truant—Cartoon (7 m.)	Jan. 13
W-544	The Unwelcome Guest—Cartoon (7 m.)	Feb. 17
W-545	Shooting of Dan McGoo—Cartoon (7 m.)	Mar. 3
M-590	Little White Lie—Miniature (11 m.)	Mar. 3
K-575	It Looks Like Rain—Pass. Par. (9 m.)	Mar. 3
S-559	Track & Field Quiz—Pete Smith (9 m.)	Mar. 3
W-546	Jerkey Turkey—Cartoon (7 m.)	Apr. 7
S-560	Hollywood Scout—Pete Smith (8 m.)	Apr. 14
K-576	The Seasaw and the Shoes—Pass. Par. (10 m.)	May 5

*(More to come)***1944-45**

T-611	Shrines of Yucatan—Traveltalk (9 m.)	Feb. 24
T-612	See El Salvador—Traveltalk (10 m.)	Mar. 31

**Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels****1943-44**

A-501	Dark Shadows—Special (22 m.)	Dec. 16
A-502	Fall Guy—Special (18½ m.)	Apr. 14
A-503	The Last Installment (18 m.)	May 5

*(More to come)***Paramount—One Reel**

U4-3	Hot Lip Jasper—Puppetoon (7 m.)	Jan. 5
L4-2	Unusual Occupations No. 2 (10 m.)	Jan. 12
Y4-2	Who's Who in Animal Land—Speaking of Animals (9 m.)	Jan. 19
R4-4	Out Fishin'—Sportlight (9 m.)	Jan. 26
E4-2	Pop-Pie-Ala-Mode—Popeye (7 m.)	Jan. 26
P4-3	When G. I. Johnny Comes Home—Noveltoon (8 m.)	Feb. 2
J4-3	Popular Science No. 3 (10 m.)	Feb. 16
R4-5	Blue Winners—Sportlight (9 m.)	Feb. 23
D4-3	Magicalulu—Little Lulu (7 m.)	Mar. 2
L4-3	Unusual Occupations No. 3 (10 m.)	Mar. 9
Y4-3	In the Public Eye—Speak. of Animals (8 m.)	Mar. 16
E4-3	Tops in the Big Top—Popeye (6 m.)	Mar. 16

U4-4	Jasper Tell—Puppetoon (8 m.)	Mar. 23
R4-6	Game Bag—Sportlight (9 m.)	Mar. 30
P4-4	Scrappily Married—Noveltoon (8 m.)	Mar. 30
J4-4	Popular Science No. 4 (10 m.)	Apr. 6
D4-4	Beau Ties—Little Lulu (7 m.)	Apr. 20
E4-4	Shape Ahoy—Popeye	Apr. 27
R4-7	White Rhapsody—Sportlight (9 m.)	May 4
L4-4	Unusual Occupations No. 4 (10 m.)	May 11
Y4-4	Talk of the Town—Speak. of Animals (9 m.)	May 18

U4-5	Jasper's Minstrels—Puppetoon (9 m.)	May 25
D4-5	Slap Happy—Little Lulu	May 25
J4-5	Popular Science No. 5	June 1
E4-5	For Better or Nurse—Popeye	June 8

**Paramount—Two Reels**

FF4-2	Star Bright—Musical Parade (20 m.)	Dec. 15
FF4-3	Bombalera—Musical Parade (20 m.)	Feb. 9
FF4-4	Isle of Tabu—Musical Parade (17 m.)	Apr. 13
FF4-5	Boogie Woogie—Musical Parade (17 m.)	June 15

**Republic—Two Reels**

481	Zorro's Black Whip—Lewis-Stirling (12 episodes)	Dec. 16
482	Manhunt of Mystery Island—Bailey-Stirling (15 episodes)	Mar. 17
483	Federal Operator 99 (12 episodes)	July 7

**RKO—One Reel**

54106	Tiger Trouble—Disney (7 m.)	Jan. 5
54204	Flicker Flashbacks No. 4 (9 m.)	Jan. 19
54107	The Clock Watcher—Disney (8 m.)	Jan. 26
54306	Court Craft—Sportscope (8 m.)	Jan. 26
54307	Ski Gulls—Sportscope (7 m.)	Feb. 23
54205	Flicker Flashbacks No. 5 (9 m.)	Mar. 2
54308	Athlete of the Year—Sportscope (8 m.)	Mar. 23
54109	The Eyes Have It—Disney (7 m.)	Mar. 30
54206	Flicker Flashbacks No. 6 (8 m.)	Apr. 13
54309	Timber Doodles—Sportscope (8 m.)	Apr. 20
54110	African Diary—Disney (7 m.)	Apr. 20
54111	Donald's Crime—Disney (7 m.)	May 11

**RKO—Two Reels**

53402	Ali Baba—Edgar Kennedy (18 m.)	Jan. 5
53103	Power Unlimited—This is America (17 m.)	Jan. 19
53104	On Guard—This is America (17 m.)	Feb. 9
53703	Birthday Blues—Leon Errol (17 m.)	Feb. 16
53403	Sleepless Tuesday—Edgar Kennedy (18 m.)	Feb. 23
53105	Honorable Discharge—This is America (17 m.)	Mar. 9
53204	Swing Fever—Headliners (19 m.)	Mar. 16
53106	Guam—Salvaged Island—This is America (17 min.)	Apr. 13
53107	Dress Parade—This is America (16 m.)	May 4
53704	Let's Go Stepping—Leon Errol (17 m.)	May 4

**Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel**

5509	Mighty Mouse & the Pirate—Terry. (6 m.)	Jan. 12
5257	Canyons of the Sun—Adventure (8 m.) (re.)	Jan. 19
5302	Steppin' Pretty—Sports. (8 m.)	Jan. 19
5510	Port of Missing Mice—Terrytoon (6½ m.)	Feb. 2
5353	Nova Scotia—Sports (8 m.)	Feb. 9
5511	Ants in Your Pantry—Terrytoon (6 m.)	Feb. 16
5255	City of Paradox—Adventure (8 m.)	Mar. 2
5512	Raiding the Raiders—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Mar. 9
5256	Alaskan Grandeur—Adventure (8 m.)	Mar. 16
5513	Post War Inventions—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Mar. 23
5258	Land of 10,000 Lakes—Adventure (8 m.) (re.)	Mar. 30
5514	Fisherman's Luck—Terrytoon (7 m.) (re.)	Apr. 6
5260	Sikhs of Patiala—Adventure (8 m.)	Apr. 13
5515	Mighty Mouse & the Kilkenny Cats—Terrytoon (7 m.) (re.)	Apr. 27
5259	Isle of Romance—Adventure (8 m.) (re.)	May 4
5516	Mother Goose Nightmare—Terrytoon (7 m.) (re.)	May 11
5517	Smoky Joe—Terrytoon (7 m.)	May 25
5354	Down the Fairway—Sports (8 m.)	June 1
5518	The Silver Streak—Terrytoon (7 min.)	June 8
5902	Do You Remember?—Lew Lahr (8 m.) (formerly "Good Old Days")	June 22
5519	Aesops Fable—The Mosquito—Terrytoon (7 m.)	June 29
5201	Modeling for Money—Adventure (8 m.)	July 6
	Mighty Mouse & the Wolf—Terrytoon (7 m.)	July 20
5261	The Empire State—Adventure (8 m.)	July 27

**Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels**

- Vol. 11 No. 6—Report on Italy—March of  
Time (17 m.) .....Jan. 26
- Vol. 11 No. 7—The West Coast Question—March of  
Time (16 m.) .....Feb. 23
- Vol. 11 No. 8—Memo from Britain—March of  
Time (16 m.) .....Mar. 23
- Vol. 11 No. 9—The Returning Veteran—March of  
Time (18 min.) .....Apr. 20

**Universal—One Reel**

- 9234 Pied Piper of Basin St.—Cartune (7 m.)....Jan. 15
- 9373 ABC Pin-up—Per. Odd. (9 m.).....Jan. 15
- 9374 Pigtail Pilot—Per. Odd. (9 m.).....Jan. 22
- 9354 White Treasure—Var. Views (9 m.).....Jan. 29
- 9236 Chew Chew Baby—Cartune (7 m.).....Feb. 5
- 9237 Sliphorn King of Polaroo—Cartune (7 m.)..Mar. 19
- 9238 Woody Dines Out—Cartune (7 m.).....May 14
- 9375 Author in Babyland—Per. Odd. (9 m.)....May 14

**Universal—Two Reels**

- 9124 Jive Busters—Musical (15 m.).....Jan. 17
- 9581 Invitation to Death—Jungle Queen No. 1  
(17 m.) .....Jan. 23
- 9582 Jungle Sacrifice—Jungle Queen No. 2 (17m.)..Jan. 30
- 9583 The Flaming Mountain—Jungle Queen No. 3  
(17 m.) .....Feb. 6
- 9584 Wild Cats Stampede—Jungle Queen No. 4  
(17 m.) .....Feb. 13
- 9125 Melody Parade—Musical (15 m.).....Feb. 14
- 9585 The Burning Jungle—Jungle Queen No. 5  
(17 m.) .....Feb. 20
- 9586 Danger Ship—Jungle Queen No. 6 (17 m.)..Feb. 27
- 9126 Swing Serenade—Musical (15 m.).....Feb. 28
- 9587 Trip Wire Murder—Jungle Queen No. 7  
(17 m.) .....Mar. 6
- 9588 The Mortar Bomb—Jungle Queen No. 8  
(17 m.) .....Mar. 13
- 9589 Death Watch—Jungle Queen No. 9 (17 m.)..Mar. 20
- 9590 Execution Chamber—Jungle Queen No. 10  
(17 m.) .....Mar. 27
- 9591 The Trail to Doom—Jungle Queen No. 11  
(17 m.) .....Apr. 3
- 9592 Dragged Under—Jungle Queen No. 12  
(17 m.) .....Apr. 10
- 9593 The Secret of the Sword—Jungle Queen No. 13  
(17 m.) .....Apr. 17
- 9881 The Master Key—Stone Wiley (13  
episodes) .....Apr. 24
- 9127 Rockabye Rhythm—Musical (15 m.).....June 20

**Vitaphone—One Reel**

- 1721 Herr Meets Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)....Jan. 13
- 1503 Glamour in Sports—Sports (10 m.).....Jan. 13
- 1306 Fella with a Fiddle—Hit. Par. (7 m.).....Jan. 20
- 1606 Rhythm of the Rhumba—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)..Jan. 27
- 1701 Draftee Daffy—Looney Tune (7 m.).....Jan. 27
- 1504 Bikes and Skis—Sports (10 m.).....Feb. 10
- 1722 Unruly Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.).....Feb. 10
- 1307 When I Yoo Hoo—Hit Parade (7 m.).....Feb. 24
- 1702 Trap Happy Porky—Looney Tune (7 m.)...Feb. 24
- 1505 Cuba Calling—Sports (10 m.).....Mar. 10
- 1404 Overseas Roundup—Varieties (10 m.).....Mar. 17
- 1308 I Only Have Eyes for You—Hit Par. (7 m.)..Mar. 17
- 1607 Musical Mexico—Merrie Melody (7 m.)....Mar. 24
- 1703 Life with Feathers—Mer. Mel. (7 m.).....Mar. 24
- 1506 Swimcapades—Sports (10 m.).....Apr. 7
- 1704 Behind the Meat Ball—Looney Tune (7 m.)..Apr. 7
- 1309 Ain't We Got Fun—Hit Par. (7 m.).....Apr. 21
- 1723 Hare Trigger—Bugs Bunny (7 m.) (re.)...May 5
- 1608 Circus Band—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) (re.)...May 5
- 1507 Water Babies—Sports (10 m.) (re.) .....May 19
- 1705 Ain't that Ducky—Looney Tune (7 m.) (re.)..May 19
- 1706 Gruesome Twosome—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.)..May 26
- 1405 Overseas Roundup No. 2—Varieties (10 m.)..May 26
- 1508 Mexican Sea Sports—Sports (10 m.) (re.)..June 2
- 1509 Bahama Sea Sports—Sports (10 m.).....June 19
- 1609 Bands Across the Sea—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)..June 23
- 1510 Flivver Flying—Sports (10 m.).....June 30
- 1707 Tale of Two Mice—Looney Tune (7 m.)....June 30

**Vitaphone—Two Reels**

- 1002 Beachhead to Berlin—Special (20 m.).....Jan. 6
- 1106 Congo—Featurette (20 m.) .....Feb. 17
- 1003 Pledge to Bataan—Special (20 m.).....Feb. 3
- 1107 Navy Nurse—Featurette (20 m.) .....Mar. 3
- 1109 Are Animals Actors?—Featurette (20 m.)..Mar. 31
- 1110 Law of the Badlands—Featurette (20 m.)...Apr. 14
- 1108 It Happened in Springfield—Featurette  
(20 m.) .....Apr. 28
- 1111 Plantation Models—Featurette (20 m.)....May 12
- 1004 Coney Island Honeymoon—Special (re.)  
(20 m.) .....June 9

**NEWSWEEKLY  
NEW YORK  
RELEASE DATES**

**Pathe News**

- 55177 Sat. (O) ...May 19
- 55278 Wed. (E) ..May 23
- 55179 Sat. (O) ...May 26
- 55280 Wed. (E) ..May 30
- 55181 Sat. (O) ...June 2
- 55282 Wed. (E) ..June 6
- 55182 Sat. (O) ...June 9
- 55283 Wed. (E) ..June 13
- 55184 Sat. (O) ...June 16
- 55285 Wed. (E) ..June 20
- 55186 Sat. (O) ...June 23
- 55287 Wed. (E) ..June 27
- 55188 Sat. (O) ...June 30
- 55289 Wed. (E) ..July 4
- 55190 Sat. (O) ...July 7

**Metrotone News**

- 272 Thurs. (E) ...May 17
- 273 Tues. (O)....May 22
- 274 Thurs. (E) ...May 24
- 275 Tues. (O)....May 29
- 276 Thurs. (E) ...May 31
- 277 Tues. (O)....June 5
- 278 Thurs. (E) ...June 7
- 279 Tues. (O)....June 12
- 280 Thurs. (E) ...June 14
- 281 Tues. (O)....June 19
- 282 Thurs. (E) ...June 21
- 283 Tues. (O)....June 26
- 284 Thurs. (E) ...June 28
- 285 Tues. (O) ....July 3
- 286 Thurs. (E) ...July 5

**Paramount News**

- 74 Thurs. (E) ....May 17
- 75 Sunday (O) ...May 20
- 76 Thurs. (E) ....May 24
- 77 Sunday (O) ...May 27
- 78 Thurs. (E) ....May 31
- 79 Sunday (O) ...June 3
- 80 Thurs. (E) ....June 7
- 81 Sunday (O) ...June 10
- 82 Thurs. (E) ....June 14
- 83 Sunday (O) ...June 17
- 84 Thurs. (E) ....June 21
- 85 Sunday (O) ...June 24
- 86 Thurs. (E) ....June 28
- 87 Sunday (O) ...July 1
- 88 Thurs. (E) ....July 5

**Universal**

- 398 Thurs. (E) ...May 17
- 399 Tues. (O)....May 22
- 400 Thurs. (E) ...May 24
- 401 Tues. (O)....May 29
- 402 Thurs. (E) ...May 31
- 403 Tues. (O)....June 5
- 404 Thurs. (E) ...June 7
- 405 Tues. (O)....June 12
- 406 Thurs. (E) ...June 14
- 407 Tues. (O)....June 19
- 408 Thurs. (E) ...June 21
- 409 Tues. (O)....June 26
- 410 Thurs. (E) ...June 28
- 411 Tues. (O) ....July 3
- 412 Thurs. (E)....July 5

**Fox Movietone**

- 74 Thurs. (E) ....May 17
- 75 Tues. (O)....May 22
- 76 Thurs. (E) ....May 24
- 77 Tues. (O)....May 29
- 78 Thurs. (E) ...May 31
- 79 Tues. (O)....June 5
- 80 Thurs. (E) ....June 7
- 81 Tues. (O)....June 12
- 82 Thurs. (E) ....June 14
- 83 Tues. (O)....June 19
- 84 Thurs. (E) ....June 21
- 85 Tues. (O)....June 26
- 86 Thurs. (E) ....June 28
- 87 Tues. (O) ....July 3
- 88 Thurs. (E) ....July 5

**All American News**

- 134 Friday .....May 18
- 135 Friday .....May 25
- 136 Friday .....June 1
- 137 Friday .....June 8
- 138 Friday .....June 15
- 139 Friday .....June 22
- 140 Friday .....June 29
- 141 Friday .....July 6



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## Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....	\$15.00
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Australia, New Zealand,	
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Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, MAY 26, 1945

No. 21

### REISSUES RUNNING RAMPANT

In the May 17 issue of *Motion Picture Daily*, there appeared an item in which that paper claimed to have learned authoritatively that Universal Pictures was curtailing its production of "B" product as a result of the raw stock shortage. According to the *Daily*, "the company had planned to release 54 pictures during the 1944-45 selling season and will be able to deliver only about 45 including four from independents." It was claimed that, because of the raw stock shortage, Universal had been compelled to delay the release of several films earlier in the season, and it was expected that also several more films set for release between now and the end of the season will have to be delayed.

Having recalled that Universal had announced a few weeks ago that it would reissue "Destry Rides Again," starring Marlene Dietrich, HARRISON'S REPORTS could not understand why the company, on the one hand, had insufficient raw film stock to take care of promised 1944-45 pictures, and, on the other hand, had sufficient raw stock to take care of new prints on a reissue.

A telephone call to one of the Universal officials brought forth the response that the raw stock shortage was interfering with the delivery of his company's pictures, and that, unless the raw stock situation improved, fewer pictures would be released than had been planned.

This executive was then asked how Universal could reissue "Destry Rides Again" when the raw stock on hand was insufficient to meet the needs of prints on new features, let alone a reissue? He replied that plans to reissue "Destry Rides Again" had been dropped, but that the company was preparing instead to reissue "Imitation of Life," starring Claudette Colbert, and "East Side of Heaven," starring Bing Crosby. He stated that new prints of these two reissues were being made, but he did not explain how the company could find sufficient raw stock for prints of reissues but not enough for prints of new features.

What reasonable explanation, if any, can Universal have?

It cannot get away from the fact that its use of critical raw stock to reissue two old features, thus reducing the number of new features it promised to its 1944-45 contract-holders, is a flagrant abuse of the faith that those contract-holders had in the company when they signed for the season's product.

Universal, however, does not stand alone as an injudicious user of raw stock; other companies are equally guilty in the matter of reissuing old pictures at a time and in a manner that least serves the interests of the exhibitors.

For instance, there is Paramount, which has just announced that it will reissue within the next two or three months Cecil B. DeMille's "Northwest Mounted Police," starring Gary Cooper and Madeline Car-

roll, and "This Gun for Hire," starring Alan Ladd. The "Sign of the Cross," another reissue, is presently making the rounds.

Unlike Universal, which sells its pictures under the block-booking system, Paramount does not owe its customers a specific number of pictures and has made them no promises. Its contractual obligations to the exhibitors are limited to the number of pictures sold in a block after tradeshowing. In these times, however, the judicious use of raw film stock is a moral obligation that it owes to every exhibitor, whose equity in this commodity is, as has been said in these columns many times, undeniable. Yet this company, which has the largest backlog of product in the industry, retains its finished pictures in its vaults, thereby aggravating further the artificial picture shortage, and then seeks to cash in on this condition by using rationed raw stock to reissue old pictures, which many exhibitors will not book, and which other exhibitors are compelled to book merely in order to keep their theatres open.

In the same category with Paramount are the following distributors: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, which has reissued "Waterloo Bridge," with Robert Taylor and Vivian Leigh, and "Naughty Marietta," with Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy; Twentieth Century-Fox, which is reissuing "Call of the Wild," with Clark Gable; and Warner Brothers, which, although it has made only a small number of new prints of "Torrid Zone," with James Cagney and Ann Sheridan, in order to release the picture "unofficially" on a territorial scale rather than on a national scale, is guilty of having reissued on a national scale, during the 1943-44 selling season, a total of fifteen pictures, which is more than the reissues of all the other companies combined.

Although most of the companies make their old pictures available to the exhibitors, these are limited to spot bookings—that is, they are made available if the exchange has an old print on hand. There is nothing wrong with this practice, since no raw stock is used to make new prints. The condition complained of is where pictures are reissued on a national scale, with the result that new product is withheld and the product-shortage is aggravated under the pretext of a raw stock shortage.

This reissue "racket" has gotten out of hand. The subsequent-run exhibitor is, of course, the goat. The extended runs in the key theatres have created a product jam, blocking the normal flow of pictures to such an extent that in some territories, as for example Minneapolis, a number of exhibitors are planning to curtail their operations, some opening on week-ends only. Many of these exhibitors, regardless of their own wishes, must either book reissues or shut down. The distributors, aware of this predicament, have turned the reissue market into one of their most

(Continued on last page)

**"Thrill of a Romance" with Van Johnson, Esther Williams and Lauritz Melchior**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 102 min.)

There is no question that this romantic picture will do exceptional business. Van Johnson is one of the most popular stars today, and the picture has been photographed in enchanting Technicolor photography. But the story is trite; it deals with the romance of a young aviator on furlough who falls in love with a young woman, just married to a materialistic business man, and who is left alone when her husband, on their first day of marriage, takes a business trip. This theme has been done to death. Individual scenes, however, and good acting as well as good music redeem it. The romantic scenes have been handled with good taste; the actors show restraint, and the music makes them so romantically sentimental that the spectator wishes that there had been no obstacle to their love. The music is effective particularly in the scenes where it accompanies the rhythmical movements of the swimming principals in a pool. Esther Williams is a beautiful girl, and Van Johnson is as charming as ever; they make a good romantic pair. Lauritz Melchior, the famous tenor, sings several classical pieces and some popular. He has a magnetic personality and adds to the picture's entertaining qualities. In some situations he acts as a chaperone to the two young folk, hopelessly in love with each other, but seemingly hopelessly separated. Mr. Melchior's encouragement of a young colored boy, a singer, helps him win a greater share of the audience's sympathy. In the opening scenes, one gets the impression that the picture would be a daring advertisement for *Fortune Magazine*, for it is boldly displayed and spoken about. *Fortune* could not have bought this plugging for one hundred thousand dollars:—

On the day of their honeymoon, Carleton Young, a young business tycoon, who had swept Esther Williams off her feet, leaves her at a resort and goes to Washington on an important business trip. While he is away, Esther becomes acquainted with Johnson, and the two fall madly in love with each other. On the morning that Young returns, Esther and Johnson are shown returning from the woods, where they had been lost overnight. His suspicions aroused, Young orders his lawyers to bring annulment proceedings. His action pleases, not only the two young folk, but also their friends at the resort. Melchior, happy that matters had turned out so well, assembles an orchestra to serenade the young couple, and he sings a romantic song.

Richard Connell and Gladys Lehman wrote the screen play, Joe Pasternak produced it, and Richard Thorpe directed it. The cast includes Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra, Frances Gifford, Henry Travers, Spring Byington and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Where Do We Go from Here?" with Fred MacMurray, Joan Leslie and June Haver**

(20th Century-Fox, June; time, 77 min.)

Very entertaining. Those of you who have been waiting for a musical that is "different" will find that this one fits the bill; it should go over pretty well with all types of audiences, for it has some excellent and original comedy situations, good Technicolor photography, and singing, dancing and music that should appeal to different tastes. Moreover, it has been given an imaginative treatment. For the most part, the story is an historical fantasy, revolving around the adven-

tures of Fred MacMurray, a "4-F" with a burning desire to enter any branch of the armed services. With the aid of a genie from an Aladdin-like lamp, he finds himself whisked back hundreds of years, first appearing as a soldier with Washington's army at Valley Forge, secondly, as a sailor on Christopher Columbus' flagship, the Santa Maria, and finally as a Dutchman in the New Amsterdam era. In each of these episodes the comedy is provoked in the main by the fact that MacMurray, remembering his history, knows just what events will take place and guides himself accordingly. While each episode is well done and is rich in satirical humor, the one dealing with Columbus' discovery of America, which is done in the "Gilbert and Sullivan" manner, is by far the best. MacMurray is excellent, and he is given able support by the other members of the cast:—

MacMurray, in love with June Haver, a flighty girl, but blind to Joan Leslie's love for him, collects scrap metal to aid the war effort. Finding an old lamp and rubbing it, MacMurray is astounded when a genie (Gene Sheldon) appears and informs him that he had the power to grant him three wishes. He expresses a desire to join the army and soon finds himself with Washington (Alan Mowbray) at Valley Forge. His efforts to help Washington capture the Hessians ends in his own capture, causing him to wish that he joined the navy. The genie obliges by whisking him onto the Santa Maria, where he helps put down a mutiny against Columbus (Fortunio Bonanova). When Columbus stops at Cuba, MacMurray continues to America, where he becomes involved in a badger game with an Indian and his squaw (Anthony Quinn and June Haver), who sell him Manhattan Island for twenty-four dollars. Recalling his history, MacMurray wishes he could sell the island to the Dutch settlers. The genie obliges him once again, and MacMurray finds himself in New Amsterdam, where the crafty Dutchmen cheat him out of his property and jail him for non-payment of taxes. Though all seems lost, the genie grants MacMurray an extra wish and, through his magic powers, brings him back to the present day and arranges for his induction into the Marines despite his "4-F" status.

Morrie Ryskind wrote the screen play, William Perlberg produced it, and Gregory Ratoff directed it. The cast includes Carlos Ramirez, Herman Bing, Howard Freeman and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Blonde from Brooklyn" with Robert Stanton and Lynn Merrick**

(Columbia, June 21; time, 65 min.)

Just a minor program comedy, with music. Whenever the principals sing, the picture manages to be fairly entertaining, but as soon as they go back to the story it become tiresome, for it is all talk and no action. Moreover, the plot developments are trite and obvious, the dialogue uninteresting, and the comedy for the most part ineffective. Robert Stanton, the hero, was formerly known as Bob Haymes. He is a Columbia contract player, and has appeared in a number of their minor pictures. The production values are modest:—

Released from the army, Stanton, a former song-and-dance man, makes the acquaintance of Lynn Merrick, a juke-box girl, who hoped to become a radio singer. When they take part in an impromptu song routine at a night club, the young couple are approached by Thurston Hall, a Southern Colonel of



questionable repute, who persuades them to appoint him their manager. Hall coaches the pair to talk and act like Southerners, in preparation for an audition on a radio program that specialized in Southern atmosphere, and he gives Lynn the name of an esteemed but extinct Southern family. The young folk win a place on the program, and get so much publicity that Lynn is "discovered" to be the long lost heiress to the Southern family's estate. To stop Lynn from confessing her duplicity, Hall, seeking to get his hands on the fortune, arranges with Matt Willis, a confederate, to pose as another lost heir and to claim a share in the estate. They learn, however, that only a woman can inherit the estate. Stanton, unaware that Willis was a fake relative, suggests that Lynn marry him to collect the money and avoid unfavorable publicity, then divorce him. Meanwhile the real heir to the estate is found and Willis is exposed as a fake. Angered because Stanton had suggested she marry Willis, Lynn, suspecting his motive, leaves him on the eve of their radio debut. Stanton locates her and, after convincing her that he, too, had been victimized by Hall, induces her to rejoin him. Their radio debut is a huge success.

Erna Lazurus wrote the screen play, Ted Richmond produced it, and Del Lord directed it. The cast includes Mary Treen, Byron Foulger and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Frozen Ghost" with Lon Chaney and Evelyn Ankers**

(Universal, June 29; time, 61 min.)

The followers of psychological murder melodramas should find this program picture to their liking. The action, which revolves around a professional hypnotist who becomes obsessed with the idea that he is a murderer, unfolds in a fairly interesting manner and, though the story is far-fetched, it is mystifying and has considerable suspense. Much of the action takes place in a wax museum, giving the picture an effective eerie atmosphere. The mood of the story is one of brooding terror, with no comedy to relieve the tension:—

Lon Chaney and Evelyn Ankers, his fiancée, are teamed in a radio act in which she, through hypnotic treatment from him, reads the minds of members in the studio audience. When a drunkard in the audience questions Chaney's hypnotic powers, Chaney agrees to put him in a trance. The man drops dead just as Chaney starts to work on him. Although a coroner's jury finds that the man had died of a heart condition, Chaney believes that he had caused the death. Brooding, he disbands the act and breaks his engagement to Evelyn. Through Milburn Stone, his manager, Chaney obtains employment in a wax museum owned by Tala Birell, hoping the work will help him to rehabilitate himself. Martin Kosleck, Tala's eccentric assistant, a doctor in disrepute, hates Chaney because of a belief that he was in love with Elena Verdugo, Tala's niece. When both Tala and her niece disappear, Chaney, who had been suffering lapses of memory, fears that he might have killed them. Douglas Dumbrille, a detective, suspects Chaney because of his inability to account for his movements. In desperation, Chaney goes to Evelyn for help. He puts her in a trance and, through her psychic powers, learns that Kosleck and Stone were plotting to declare him insane in order to gain control of his fortune. To this end, they had planned the disappearance of the two women, and were trying to pin the

guilt on him. Tala had been murdered, but Elena was still alive. On Evelyn's direction, and with the help of Dumbrille, Chaney manages to save Elena just as Kosleck prepares to burn her alive. Kosleck dies in the flaming furnace himself, and Stone is apprehended by the police. His obsession gone, Chaney reunites with Evelyn.

Bernard Schubert and Luci Ward wrote the screen play, Will Cowan produced it, and Harold Young directed it.

Rather horrifying for children.

### **CANCEL A CONFUSING SHORT SUBJECT**

"Two Down and One to Go," the War Department short subject dealing with the point system under which soldiers will be released from the army, is being criticized severely by newspapers, exhibitors, and the general public throughout the country, on the grounds that it is spreading confusion among relatives of soldiers who, guided by the information contained in the picture, cannot figure out whether or not their loved ones are eligible for discharge from the army.

The trouble with the picture is that it was produced many months before V-E Day, and the demobilization system as then planned has since been changed. Consequently, those viewing the picture come out of the theatre utterly confused by what they have seen and heard.

Criticism of the picture has been so pronounced that Bob O'Donnell, general manager of the Interstate Circuit in Texas, cancelled all showings of the picture, following a conference with War Department heads who unofficially expressed their disappointment in the picture and agreed that it was not suitable for public consumption.

Meanwhile many exhibitors have taken steps to cancel their bookings of the picture. For instance, Pete Wood, secretary of the ITO of Ohio, issued a bulletin last week urging the members of his organization not to play the short subject "because the antiquated point system will prove confusing to your patrons."

This paper has learned from an official of the War Activities Committee that the War Department, although informed that the picture is being criticized as obsolete, and that many exhibitors are cancelling bookings, has made no move to withdraw the picture from public exhibition.

HARRISON'S REPORTS suggests that you do not wait for the picture to be withdrawn officially. If you have not yet played "One Down and Two to Go," you should not hesitate to cancel your booking at once. While all of you realize that the exhibition of Government information shorts is a patriotic duty, you must consider that, in this particular case, the exhibition of this short subject will serve, not to enlighten your patrons, but to confuse them.

A new two-reel subject titled, "On To Tokyo," has just been rushed to completion by the War Department, and the War Activities Committee has announced that the new picture will serve to supplement "One Down and Two to Go," in that the information it contains about the demobilization and redeployment of troops is up to date and accurate. The picture will be released on May 31 through the Universal exchanges.

You will do your patrons a service by booking "On to Tokyo" rather than "One Down and Two to Go."

profitable sidelines by demanding fantastic rental terms, in some cases better than the terms demanded when the pictures were originally released. And when one takes into consideration the fact that these reissues have already earned back their original investment plus profit, and that the only expense to the distributors now is the cost of prints and advertising, it becomes evident that the profits they are realizing probably exceed the profits made on many a new film.

This paper has been in touch with a number of exhibitors to learn their reactions to reissues, and a consensus of their opinions is as follows:

(a) Some will not book reissues under any circumstances lest their theatres lose prestige.

(b) In double feature situations, many find that the use of a reissue in support of a new feature causes a decline in attendance. If they cannot obtain a new "B" picture as the supporting picture, and they run only a single feature, a large percentage of their patrons stay away.

(c) All agreed that rental terms for reissues are way out of line, but most of them admitted that spot bookings could be had at fairly reasonable terms.

(d) All agreed that a large percentage of their patrons were tiring of "oldies."

(e) Many felt that the distributors were juggling their raw stock allocations and releases in a manner aimed at perpetuating a "seller's market" through the maintenance of an artificial product shortage, thus leaving them in a position to dictate their own terms.

The root of the abuses the exhibitors are undergoing today lies in the failure of the War Production Board to regulate the producer-distributors' use of raw stock. Under proper control, Universal would not be permitted to cut down arbitrarily the delivery of new pictures, an act that serves to tighten further the product shortage, and to set the stage for the sale of the reissues, the prints of which will come from raw stock that could have been used for prints of new features. And Paramount and some of the other companies would not be permitted to produce a limitless number of pictures with rationed raw stock only to hoard them in their vaults, marking time while the reissues make the rounds. Moreover, none of the companies would be permitted to use its raw stock allocation to further its own interests in foreign markets while the American exhibitors go hungry for pictures.

The motion picture industry is a competitive business, a sort of "survival of the fittest," but without raw film stock there would be no industry, for every phase of the business depends upon its availability. When the Government undertakes to control the amount of raw stock the industry should receive, it automatically places restrictions and limitations on free and open competition. It, therefore, assumes at once the responsibility to see that all parties concerned either benefit or suffer proportionately. Under the present set-up, the producer-distributors and the key-run theatres are having the time of their lives, while the subsequent-run exhibitor has to stand by and lick his wounds.

An immediate remedy is needed. The situation is too far gone for long drawn-out industry-Government conferences to find a solution. The Government, through its Department of Justice, is well acquainted with industry practices and abuses, and it could easily determine how seriously the producer-distributors' uncontrolled disposition of raw stock is affecting the smaller fellow in the business. This is war-time, and the Government, through its rationing of raw stock and its restrictions on other commodities and man-

power used in the functions of the business, is already in partial control of the industry. It is apparent that this control is either insufficient in extent or injudicious in its exercise. An overhauling is necessary so long as we continue to operate under war-time conditions.

Mr. Stanley Adams, head of the WPB's Consumers Durable Goods Division, has been informed by numerous exhibitor organizations of the abuses suffered by the subsequent-run exhibitors under the present system of raw stock allocation, and he has stated that the distribution of prints must be on a fair and equal basis for all or the WPB will bring immediate action for relief. He made that statement months ago, but he has never gone beyond the talking stage. His laxity has thus far proved harmful, and, based on his performance to date, there is every reason to believe that under him conditions will grow worse.

Take the matter up with your Congressional representatives. Perhaps they will help you find some way of getting Mr. Adams to match his words with actions.

### **"CALL OF THE WILD" TO BE MADE AVAILABLE ON JUNE 15**

In the issues of May 5 and May 12, this paper complained vehemently about the failure of Twentieth Century-Fox to deliver to numerous exhibitors the Clark Gable reissue, "Call of the Wild." And, as it is evident from a reading of those issues, this paper carried directly to both Twentieth Century-Fox and MGM, its campaign to have the picture made available to the Fox customers.

The controversy came to a close last week when Tom Connors, the Twentieth Century-Fox Vice President in charge of world-wide distribution, issued the following statement:

"'Call of the Wild' will be made available for bookings beginning June 15th. The picture was withdrawn from release sometime ago because of legal complications. Clark Gable's services for the picture had been loaned by Metro and it was claimed that certain restrictive provisions in the agreement for the loan of that star's services had been violated. These difficulties have now been ironed out, thereby clearing the way for the picture's release."

Although this explanation is somewhat ambiguous, it would serve no useful purpose to delve deeper into the causes that impelled Twentieth Century-Fox to withhold the picture. The important thing is that the picture will now be made available, and that the valuable and critical raw stock that had gone into the processing of new prints will be put to proper use.

Mr. Connors' statement, however, made no mention of what procedure will be followed in making the picture available to those exhibitors who bought it as part of a group, only to find it omitted from the approved contracts.

These exhibitors should be given the picture in accordance with the terms originally agreed upon between themselves and the company's sales representatives. Only then will Twentieth Century-Fox be able to write *finis* satisfactorily to an issue that should never have been permitted to arise.

HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes to acknowledge that it first learned about the "Call of the Wild" situation from the communications sent out by Abram F. Myers, general counsel of National Allied and Pete Wood of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio.

Exhibitors everywhere owe a vote of thanks to these men for starting the campaign that resulted in the picture's release.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

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Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 1945

No. 22

### THE RECESSION IS ON

The transition from a war economy to a peace economy is actually under way, and with such rapidity that the predictions about a general business decline, made only a few weeks ago by business experts, have already come to pass.

From areas throughout the country we hear of sharp contract cutbacks, with the resulting jump in unemployment, and with reduced earnings to those still employed. The vast Willow Run airplane plant near Detroit is scheduled to close down within four weeks, adding thousands to the unemployed ranks in that area. Many more thousands of war workers will be discharged within a few weeks as the result of the drastic curtailment in aircraft production in manufacturing centers located at Buffalo, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Long Beach and other areas.

Early last week, J. A. Krug, chairman of the War Production Board, revealed that cutbacks already instituted have slashed some seven billion dollars from the munitions program for 1945, and he stated that "the military services are now reviewing their requirements and within a few weeks it is expected that another large step-down will be ordered."

Mr. Krug estimated that, three months from now, the war machine will need 2,900,000 fewer workers, boosting the ranks of the unemployed from the current 800,000 to 1,900,000. Six months from now, he said, the number of persons no longer needed for war activities will amount to 4,800,000, including one million discharged servicemen.

Civilian production will, of course, to a large extent, absorb many war workers and reduce the overall unemployment considerably, but it should be remembered that short period lay-offs and decreased individual incomes will definitely result in a general business decline.

The different distributing companies are bringing their 1944-45 selling seasons to a close, and a number of them are already laying the groundwork to launch their selling campaigns for the 1945-46 season's product. You may be sure that they are planning to get as much rental this year as they received last year.

For the past few years money has been plentiful and one dime more or less for a moving picture ticket, or attending the movies more frequently each week than normally, did not make much difference to the majority of picture-goers. But conditions are already beginning to change. Reduced earnings and the thought of possible lay-offs are making people thrifty, and they are starting to stint themselves on extra luxuries. Many who have been attending picture shows two and three times a week will now attend on week-ends only.

Before signing up for the new season's pictures, you should bear in mind that from now on, with each passing month, business receipts will decline steadily because of reduced incomes. Even if our country is destined to enjoy the greatest peace-time prosperity in its history, you may be sure that for the next year, during the period of reconversion, the public's pocket-book will not be bulging with extra dollars. Some industryites feel that reduced incomes will draw patronage away from the higher-priced theatres to the subsequent-runs and neighborhoods, thus benefiting the smaller fellow. While this reasoning is logical, you should not expect the first-run theatres to sit back and do nothing about such a condition. In all probability they will reduce admission prices and offer extra entertainment to lure their patrons back. They have done this before, and you may expect them to do it again.

You should, therefore, use extreme caution in estimating the amount of film rental your theatre can afford to pay in accordance with coming conditions. Take into consideration the possibility of large-scale unemployment in your community, the exodus from your town of transient war-time workers, and the general downward trend of individual incomes, which will undoubtedly affect the lush box-office receipts of the last few years. Consider every factor carefully, for it is better to take precautions now than to find yourself later, hat in hand, seeking adjustments.

### EVEN IN CRITICISM LET US BE FAIR

The strong criticism from the press and the exhibitors regarding the confusion caused by the short subject, "Two Down and One to Go," has resulted in an order from the War Department withdrawing the picture from public exhibition.

Pete Wood, secretary of the ITO of Ohio, who, among others, was highly critical of this subject, states in a recent organization bulletin that "all of the agitation in connection with this subject would have been avoided if the War Activities Committee and Loew's, Inc., had given more consideration to our theatre patrons than to the desires of a few high Washington officials." Wood chides Loew's for not expending half as much time and energy in convincing the War Department to withdraw the picture as it spent in distributing it. And he adds the hope that the future will bring forth some intelligent individual in New York who has the "intestinal fortitude" to refuse flatly the wishes of the Government should a similar occasion arise.

It is difficult to understand Pete Wood's line of reasoning in his condemnation of both the WAC and  
(Continued on last page)

**"The Way Ahead" with David Niven**

(20th Century-Fox, January; time, 106 min.)

"The Way Ahead" is a superior British-made war melodrama, one of the best produced in recent years. From a box-office point of view, however, its chances are only fair, for today American audiences are shying away from most war pictures. Moreover, the players, with the exception of David Niven, are unknown in this country, and their British accents are so thick that many patrons may find some of the dialogue unintelligible. The performances, however, are excellent. Those who will see the picture should find it very satisfactory, for it is a stirring, human story about a group of British Tommies, depicting their reactions to army life from the time they start as rebellious recruits drafted from civilian life to the time they become finished fighting men.

It is a simple, well-constructed story, told with realism and with a human touch. It tells how a group of typical British men, of different ages and of varied stations in life, are plucked from civilian life to serve their country in the army. Some go willingly while others resent openly the circumstances that took them away from the comfort of their homes and from the things they loved. Each gripes about the rigors of army life, finding fault with their sergeant and generally behaving in a disgruntled manner, but their commanding officer, understanding human frailties and realizing that their untrained bodies were undergoing unaccustomed stress, patiently endures their bad tempers and complaints, and slowly but surely moulds them into a smooth-working, cooperative fighting team, eager to uphold the honor of their regiment. This they do in a thrilling sequence in which their troopship, bound for the invasion of North Africa, is torpedoed, and in a closing sequence, where they best the Nazis in an exciting Tunisian battle.

The story's simplicity and straightforwardness, the excellent characterizations, and the natural dialogue are the picture's outstanding qualities. It has considerable good humor, too, and a number of heart-tugging situations. David Niven's portrayal of the understanding officer is well done; his consideration for his men as he leads them through their military infancy eventually wins him their unified admiration.

Eric Ambler and Peter Ustinov wrote the screen play, Norman Walker and John Sutro produced it, and Carol Reed directed it. The cast includes Raymond Huntley, Billy Hartnell, Stanley Holloway, and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Back to Bataan" with John Wayne and Anthony Quinn**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 95 min.)

Revolving around Filipino resistance against the Japanese invaders, this war melodrama, though not exceptional, is a fairly good picture of its type. Its box-office possibilities can best be judged by whether or not your patrons are now receptive to war pictures. It should be pointed out, however, that, since the story's locale is in the Philippines, and since the Japanese have not yet been cleared from the islands, the picture is timely and lends itself to extensive exploitation. But except for its locale and its people, the story, which is supposedly based on actual facts, differs little in content and in treatment from the numerous war pictures that have been based on a similar theme; nevertheless,

the action is packed with thrills and excitement, and considerable stress is placed on Jap bestiality. As a matter of fact, a few of the scenes are too brutal for children. Both at the beginning and at the end of the picture, the producers have employed sequences dealing with the raid on the Cabanatuan Prison Camp, from which American prisoners were freed, effectively tying in the scenes with the main story, which covers the period from the fall of Bataan to the landings on Leyte:—

With the fall of Bataan, Colonel John Wayne is ordered to the Luzon hills to organize native guerrilla bands. In need of a patriot around whom he could rally the natives, Wayne rescues from the Japs Captain Anthony Quinn of the Philippine Scouts. Quinn, embittered because his sweetheart (Fely Franquelli) had turned collaborator, refuses to lead his people to further slaughter, but when Wayne proves to him that Fely was feigning collaboration and was actually aiding the resistance movement secretly, he takes on new courage. Under Wayne's leadership, the guerrillas, lacking arms, munitions and food, waylay Japanese patrols to build up their supplies. The Japs alarmed over the increasing resistance, intensify their activities against the guerrillas, but their brutalities serve only to strengthen the determination of the Filipinos to set their country free. After many months of hardship, American submarines bring weapons and supplies to the valiant natives, and finally, on Leyte, having received news of the proposed American landings, Wayne organizes a surprise attack on an enemy post, holding back the Jap forces from counter-attacking until American troops secure their beach-head.

Ben Barzman and Richard Landau wrote the screen play, Robert Fellows produced it, and Edward Dmytryk directed it. The cast includes Beulah Bondi, Richard Loo, Philip Ahn, Ducky Louie, Lawrence Tierney, Abner Biberman, Vladimir Sokoloff and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Blonde Ransom" with Donald Cook and Virginia Grey**

(Universal, June 15; time, 68 min.)

This comedy with music is just moderately entertaining program fare. The story is feeble and somewhat nonsensical, but it may appeal to those who can overlook poor story values, for there are a few gags that are funny and at times the situations, a few of which are slapstick, provoke considerable laughter. Moreover, the action moves at a snappy pace. The music, though not exceptional, is tuneful. There is nothing in the plot to direct an appeal to the emotions of sympathy:—

After losing \$63,000 to gangsters in a crooked poker game, Donald Cook is compelled to give them the deed to his night club as security for the debt, payable within one week. On his way home, Cook is injured in an automobile collision with Virginia Grey, a heiress, who takes him to her home. Virginia's uncle, George Barbier, anticipated a law suit, but Cook, instead of suing, offers to sell him a part interest in the night-club for \$63,000. Barbier refuses. Virginia, in love with Cook, determines to help him out of his predicament. She stages her own "kidnapping" and demands \$63,000 ransom. Hoodwinked by the ruse, Barbier delivers the money to a place designated by Virginia. The money, however,



falls into the hands of Collette Lyons and Pinky Lee, entertainers at the club, who rush to Cook. They reach the club just as the gangsters arrive, demanding the cash Cook owed them or the club. Meanwhile Barbier, recalling that Cook had asked him to invest \$63,000 in the club, connects him with the kidnapping and rushes to the club with the police. There, a series of legal complications arise relative to the kidnapping laws and, in the ensuing confusion, everyone, including Barbier, Cook, and Virginia, are taken to jail. The gangsters are sent to prison for breaking their paroles, and Barbier, using his political influence, convinces the judge that he and the others were innocent. He celebrates their release from jail by buying an interest in the night-club, where he arranges for the marriage of Cook and Virginia.

M. Coates Webster wrote the screen play, Gene Lewis produced it, and William Beaudine directed it. The cast includes Jerome Cowan, George Meeker, Ian Wolfe, and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Twice Blessed" with Preston Foster,  
Gail Patrick, Lee Wilde  
and Lyn Wilde**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 76 min.)

A very entertaining comedy, of above average program grade. It has the benefit of an amusing plot, breezy action, good comedy situations, and it is pleasant. The story revolves around identical twin sisters, one a jitterbug and the other an intellectual, who switch identities in an effort to reconcile their divorced parents, each of whom had custody of one of the girls. Many laugh-provoking entanglements result as the girls, to carry out their scheme, find it necessary to mix with each other's friends, with whom they were unacquainted, and even to romance with each other's boy-friend. Lee and Lyn Wilde look so alike that, if it were not for the clearly defined script, even the spectator would have difficulty in telling them apart. Several entertaining jitterbug sequences have been worked into the plot to good effect:—

Raised by her father (Preston Foster), an easy-going newspaperman, Lee had grown into a sixteen-year-old "jitterbug." But her twin sister, Lyn, raised by her mother (Gail Patrick), a child psychologist, had become a sedate, brilliant student. Gail and Foster had agreed to a divorce because of their different views on how to raise the girls. Returning from abroad after an absence of five years, Gail brings Lyn to Foster's apartment for a visit. Slipping away into Lee's room, the youngsters decide to try on each other's clothes. At that moment, Gail, following a quarrel with Foster, breaks into the room to take Lyn home, but unwittingly rushes out with Lee. The twins decide to continue the deception as a means of bringing their parents together. Lee, living luxuriously in a swank hotel, enjoys life no end, even romancing with Jimmy Lydon, Lyn's boyfriend. Lyn, too, finds life different through her association with Lee's "jitterbug" set, particularly Marshall Thompson, Lee's boyfriend. Matters become complicated when Lyn and Marshall become involved in a dance-hall brawl, and Gloria Hope, a newspaper woman who had matrimonial designs on Foster, obtains photographs of the fight and threatens to publish them unless Foster agrees to marry her. When the girls learn of this, and also of their mother's intention to marry a politician, they decide to act. They recover the negatives with

the aid of the friends, then march to a political meeting to prevent Gail from announcing her engagement to the politician. Then, lest Gail point to the dance-hall brawl to prove that Foster knew nothing about raising a child, the girls reveal their dual masquerade. The humor of the situation cements their parent's broken marriage.

Ethel Hill wrote the screen play, Arthur L. Freed produced it, and Harry Beaumont directed it. The cast includes Richard Gaines and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Nob Hill" with George Raft,  
Joan Bennett and Vivian Blaine**

(20th Century-Fox, July; time, 95 min.)

San Francisco's Barbary Coast at the turn of the century (a favorite locale with the producers this season) serves as the background for this lavishly produced Technicolor extravaganza; it should prove to be a most satisfying entertainment, for, despite its conventional story, it has emotional appeal and tender pathos. Other features that will surely please the rank-and-file are the beautiful girls, the sparkling dance numbers, the melodious music, and the romantic involvements centering around a two-fisted Barbary Coast saloon keeper who becomes infatuated with a Nob Hill socialite while ignoring his true love, a singer in his cafe. George Raft as the saloon owner, does well in a typical role, the sort that made him popular. Vivian Blaine's singing of sentimental songs is very effective. Top acting honors, however, go to little Peggy Ann Garner, as the little Irish immigrant befriended by Raft, who repays his kindness by patching up his broken romance with Vivian:—

Arriving from Ireland to visit her uncle, whose last known address was Raft's saloon, Peggy learns that the man had died. Raft, feeling sorry for the child, asks her to remain with him. Through Peggy, Raft becomes acquainted with Joan Bennett, a beautiful socialite, who had befriended Peggy on the boat trip from Ireland. Joan, fascinated by Raft's suave manner, visits his cafe. Both fall in love. Vivian Blaine, Raft's star entertainer, madly in love with him herself, becomes jealous of Joan and warns him that her only interest was to gain his political support to help elect her brother as district attorney. They quarrel, and Vivian leaves him to sing in a rival cafe. Despite the pleas of his friends, Raft insists upon backing Joan's brother and wins the election for him. He soon becomes disillusioned when the new district attorney cools toward him, and when Joan informs him that her love had been a passing fancy. Shunned and insulted by those who had warned him, Raft shuts down his cafe and takes to drink. He broods over his failure to listen to Vivian and to recognize her love. Peggy, blaming herself for introducing Raft to Joan, and feeling responsible for his troubles, tries vainly to bring Vivian and Raft together. Desperate, she appeals to Joan for help. Joan visits Vivian and, after a hair-pulling match between them, threatens to win Raft back for herself unless she returned to him. Vivian, brought to her senses, rounds up Raft's friends and employees, opens his cafe, and reunites with him.

Wanda Tuchok and Norman Reilly Baine wrote the screen play, Andre Daven produced it, and Henry Hathaway directed it. The cast includes Alan Reed, B. S. Pully and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

Loew's. HARRISON'S REPORTS knows for a fact that both the WAC and Loew's exerted every effort to have the subject withdrawn when it became apparent that the press and the exhibitors favored such action. The refusal of the War Department to recognize these protests sooner than it did is certainly no reflection on either the WAC or Loew's.

According to Wood, Loew's should have refused to distribute the subject regardless of the War Department's wishes in the matter. HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that Loew's acted properly; a soldier may question the wisdom of his commanding officer's orders, but he carries out those orders. The same holds true of Loew's. When it realized that its arguments against the picture had little effect on the War Department, then like a good soldier, and despite its own feelings in the matter, it carried out, to the best of its ability, the wishes of General Marshall.

In fairness to Loew's, it should be pointed out that, on very short notice, it did a remarkable job of distributing "Two Down and One to Go," obtaining more than 800 first-run bookings during the first week of the subject's availability—and with only 400 prints. This entailed a vast amount of work at considerable expense to the company.

It is indeed unfortunate that the War Department stubbornly delayed the withdrawal of the picture, which should not have been released in the first place. But let us not condemn either Loew's or the WAC as having had a hand in this stubbornness. It was far better, and certainly more meaningful, for the exhibitors themselves to take action and refuse to book the picture than for Loew's to have taken it upon itself to act for the exhibitors by refusing to distribute the picture. Such action would have left it open to criticism, not only from the War Department, but also from many exhibitors who may have had a desire to show the picture.

## A MONOPOLIST'S DREAM OF HEAVEN

At a recent trade press luncheon tendered by Lester Cowan, producer of Ernie Pyle's "Story of G.I. Joe," Cowan stated that he was not in favor of theatre divorcement because it would take away from the independent producer the one thing he can rely on—playing time. Cowan revealed that he was interested in a plan calling for a proposed circuit of theatres, of approximately twelve hundred seats each, catering to a particular type of audience, and for which he would like to produce exclusively pictures that could be held in them indefinitely. He said that he would be interested in investing money in such a circuit if it could be developed, but he added that the Government's stand against producer-owned theatres would prevent him from doing so.

Cowan's remarks, which were publicized in the trade press, have drawn the fire of National Allied, which had this to say, in part, in a recent bulletin:

"When a producer airs his views in print it usually is ballyhoo for some forthcoming picture. Almost invariably he says something that will please the little band that controls the juicy first-run accounts. Hence, when Lester Cowan recently made the headlines with an attack on theatre divorcement, we were certain that he was about to release a picture. And sure enough, we found that he made his remarks at a trade press luncheon given by himself and George Schaefer

for a 'discussion of sales plans for 'The Story of G.I. Joe.'

"But let us credit Cowan with a new angle. He is not content with the arguments usually advanced by producers who dearly love a ready-made market for their products—good, bad and run-of-the-mine. He does not like the idea of theatre divorcement because it would stand in the way of his ambition to have his own nation-wide circuit of first-run theatres. . . .

"The small number of independent exhibitors who have been lured by producer propaganda into declaring against theatre divorcement should study Cowan's ideas with the greatest care. We are certain the new Attorney General will find them interesting. For here is a monopolist's dream of heaven: A ready-made market, no more competition, no more selling expense or trouble, exclusive selling, high admissions, extended runs, drawing all patronage into the circuit theatres. How do you like that, Mr. Independent Exhibitor?

"Apparently Cowan has heard little and cares less about the mounting popular prejudice against trusts and cartels, or the avowed policy of the Government to encourage and protect 'little business.'

"If as a result of his ingratiating declaration against theatre divorcement Cowan gets 'The Story of G.I. Joe' set on favorable terms in the affiliated first-run theatres, he may experiment with his idea on that picture. According to Mr. Schaefer, the picture will be sold only on percentage and double-billing will not be permitted. Extended runs will undoubtedly be demanded an effort made to bleed the picture in the high-admission theatres. If the picture is as successful as its sponsors predict it will be, maybe Cowan will be satisfied with this first-run revenue and will not seek to sell the picture to the subsequent-run, neighborhood and small-town theatres.

"That ought to satisfy everyone except the thousands of independent exhibitors who have supported Cowan's past efforts and feel that they have some claim to his consideration, and the millions of theatre patrons—mothers, fathers, wives, sweethearts, brothers and sisters of G.I. Joe—who for a variety of reasons cannot attend the key city first-run theatres. If Cowan really wants to swim in hot water—and it would seem that he does—here is his chance!"

I don't know if Cowan, in declaring himself against theatre divorcement, was trying to woo the good will of the affiliated circuits, but I do know that he could not have chosen more appropriate remarks to alienate whatever good will he may have had with the independent exhibitors. Cowan apparently seems to forget that the independent exhibitors have been suffering from the ravages of big business for so long a time that they can hardly be expected to feel kindly towards anyone who advocates the continuance of monopolistic practices. While Cowan may have soothed the feelings of the "big fellows" in this business, I fear that he has done himself a great harm with the "little fellows." And as an independent producer, he can ill afford to antagonize the independent exhibitors, for it is through them that he may, in many instances, be able to counteract the "squeeze" by which some of the affiliated circuits often deprive an independent producer like himself of the playing time and the rental terms that his picture is entitled to receive.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

## Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....	\$15.00
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New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 1945

No. 23

### A Three-Page Shot in the Arm

From all parts of the country exhibitors have been forwarding to this office copies of a telegram sent to them by Abe Montague, general sales manager of Columbia Pictures. It seems that Montague, while visiting the Columbia studios in Hollywood, became so elated about his company's forthcoming productions that he felt the exhibitors should share his enthusiasm, and he forthwith dispatched a three-page telegram to them, outlining his observations and informing the exhibitors of what the future held for them insofar as his company's pictures were concerned. This is what he had to say, in part:

"Since arriving here few days ago have acquired considerable information I feel you should like to know about. They tell me there is nothing of more interest to any theatre operator than really good pictures, and we now have finished or in the process of shooting at our studio the greatest group of pictures since we've been a producing and distributing organization. For the 1944-45 season, and I am referring only to top bracket pictures, we have 'A Thousand and One Nights' in Technicolor . . . 'Over 21' . . . Rosalind Russell . . . in what we know will be an outstanding comedy entitled 'She Had to Say Yes.' These three 1944-45 pictures will be released one a month starting in July. Also completed is 'Kiss and Tell' taken from the terrific stage comedy still rocking the nation with laughter. Cast includes Shirley Temple. . . Everyone who has seen this outstanding film property, which will be sold separately and apart from the 1945-46 program, is of the opinion that it will stand out as one of the greatest comedies ever produced. If I am wrong about this picture I will buy you and your friends a wine dinner at any place you name. . ."

Elsewhere in his telegram Montague tells the exhibitors that shooting has been completed on "The Bandit of Sherwood Forest," a Technicolor production starring Cornel Wilde, and in the process of shooting are "Pardon My Past," with Fred MacMurray, and "The Renegades," a western drama in Technicolor. These three pictures, says Montague, "are the lead-off pictures of our 1945-46 program."

It would seem that Montague, through the aforementioned telegram, believed that it would be good psychology to bring the 1944-45 season to a close by delivering a top-bracket picture in each of the last three months, in order that the exhibitors be put in a good frame of mind just prior to the start of his company's selling campaign on the 1945-46 program. What he did not realize, however, was that the telegram would insult the intelligence of every thoughtful exhibitor in this country, for the very words that comprise the telegram constitute an admission that Columbia will once again renege on its promises to its customers. The facts speak for themselves, and here they are:

At the time Columbia announced its 1944-45 program, it promised a total of forty-four features, exclusive of westerns, and stated that "at least twenty top-flight films—the greatest number ever offered in a single year by Columbia—will be produced, with a corresponding reduction in the number of B pictures." In other words, the program was to consist of

twenty top-bracket pictures and twenty-four "B's." Before we proceed further, let me give you a list of the pictures Columbia has thus far allocated to the top-twenty brackets. They are as follows:

6001 .....	Not set
6002 Tonight and Every Night.....	Feb. 22
6003 Together Again .....	Dec. 22
6004 .....	Not set
6005 .....	Not set
6006 Counter-Attack .....	Apr. 26
6007 .....	Not set
6008 .....	Not set
6009 .....	Not set
6010 The Fighting Guardsman.....	May 24
6011 .....	Not set
6012 .....	Not set
6013 .....	Not set
6014 Eadie Was a Lady.....	Jan. 23
6015 .....	Not set
6016 Strange Affair .....	Oct. 5
6017 Crime Doctor's Courage.....	Feb. 27
6018 Rough, Tough and Ready.....	Mar. 22
6019 Leave it to Blondie.....	Feb. 22
6020 .....	Not set

Lack of space prevents us from listing the "B" pictures set for release and allocated to the lower brackets, but the record shows that, thus far, nineteen out of the promised twenty-four have been delivered.

The foregoing list shows that nine pictures have so far been allocated to the top twenty brackets. To these may be added three more—"Over 21," "A Thousand and One Nights," and "She Had to Say Yes" (formerly titled "Some Call it Love"), which Montague identifies in his telegram as top bracket pictures for the 1944-45 season. This would make a total of twelve. And of that number, not all are top productions; it is obvious that at least half of them, namely "The Fighting Guardsman," "Eadie Was a Lady," "Strange Affair," "Crime Doctor's Courage," "Rough, Tough and Ready," and "Leave it to Blondie" are strictly low-budgeted program pictures, which would be much more at home in the "B" brackets than in the higher film-rental brackets. Nevertheless, since Columbia, through its "elastic thinking" policy, has seen fit to allocate these "B's" to the top-twenty brackets, in order to make up the total of twelve, there remain eight top pictures still to come. But were will they come from?

Abe Montague admits in his telegram that, for the remainder of the 1944-45 season, and he specifically states that he is referring only to top bracket pictures, Columbia will deliver no more than three, which we have already included in the total of twelve. The only other pictures tentatively set for release this season are "Boston Blackie's Rendezvous," "You Can't Do Without Love," "The Gay Senorita," and "I Love a Bandleader." All are of "B" quality, produced on modest budgets. And in production, other than the pic-

(Continued on last page)

### **"Out of this World" with Eddie Bracken, Veronica Lake and Diana Lynn**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 96 min.)

This comedy with music, which is a travesty on "crooners," should go over pretty well with the masses, chiefly because of one running gag—every time Eddie Bracken sings, you hear Bing Crosby's voice, which has been dubbed in to fit Bracken's lip movements. Despite a few sluggish passages, the story itself is an amusing satire, in many ways paralleling Frank Sinatra's early career, and in other ways poking considerable fun at the "bobby-sox" youngsters who swoon whenever they hear their favorite "crooner" sing. It manages to keep one chuckling all the way through. The music is not outstanding but it is tuneful, and there are several production numbers and a few specialties. Outstanding among these are two novelty songs sung by the bombastic Cass Daly, and a piano playing number featuring five of the country's most popular pianists—Carmen Cavallaro, Ted Fiorita, Ray Noble, Henry King, and Joe Reichman. One amusing sequence shows Bing Crosby's four youngsters making wry faces and voicing quips when Bracken sings and they hear their father's voice:—

Diana Lynn and her all-girl band, struggling for recognition, are playing at a benefit for an orphans' home when Eddie Bracken, a telegraph messenger, is asked to sing. His "crooning" so affects Veronica Lake, secretary to an important New York business executive, that she swoons. The incident is photographed, and the resultant publicity brings fame to Bracken and the band, and an offer to appear on a radio show in New York. Diana signs Bracken to a contract at fifty dollars a week, but, needing funds to finance their trip to New York, she sells shares in the contract, with 25% going to Veronica. Diana discovers too late that she had inadvertently sold 125% of Bracken's contract, and her efforts to buy back some shares are unavailing. Meanwhile Bracken's popularity as a "crooner" soars, and he demands a raise in salary. Diana finally makes a clean breast of her predicament to Bracken and to the stockholders, who threaten to send her to jail. Bracken, angry, refuses to sing, and his radio sponsor threatens to sue the stockholders. Shrewdly taking advantage of the confusion, Veronica buys out the other stockholders. Diana, ignoring her own troubles, sets out on a campaign to free Bracken from Veronica. She sees to it that Bracken catches cold and loses his voice and, after a series of incidents in which Veronica sells the contract to the sponsor, Diana proves that it was invalid because she had been a minor when she made the deal with Bracken.

Walter DeLeon and Arthur Phillips wrote the screen play, Sam Coslow produced it, and Hal Walker directed it. The cast includes Parkyakarkus, Donald MacBride and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Steppin' in Society" with Edward Everett Horton and Gladys George**

(Republic, July 29; time, 72 min.)

A rather dull program comedy. The story idea, that of a judge consorting with a gang of criminals and pretending to be one himself in an effort to reform them, is not bad, but it has not been given a good treatment. Most of the comedy situations fall flat. It has some laugh-provoking situations, but these are so few and far between that the spectator loses interest in the proceedings and becomes restless. The players do as well as they can with the material, but they cannot overcome its deficiencies:—

Edward Everett Horton, an austere, uncompromising judge, who, in the performance of his court duties never tempered justice with understanding and sympathy, decides to go on a vacation with his wife, Gladys George. When their car breaks down on the open road, Horton and his wife are obliged, because of an approaching storm, to take shelter in a roadhouse operated by a gang of shady characters. The gang plans to rob the couple, but later,

when they rifle Horton's brief case and find a batch of papers concerning a bank robbery, they misconstrue their meaning and mistake him for a suave, big-time racketeer; the gang asks him to assume their leadership. Seeing an opportunity to reform them, Horton does not correct their mistaken impression of his identity, and agrees to the proposal. From there on, Horton has his hands full keeping the gang on the straight and narrow path while allowing them to believe that he was helping them with their crooked schemes. He even permits them to rob his own home to keep them happy. The gang eventually learns of his identity and of his reputation as a severe judge; they decide to give him a dose of his own medicine by subjecting him to a trial. Testifying in his own defense, Horton convinces the gang that he had done them much good by keeping them out of trouble, and that they in turn had helped him to attain a more human and sympathetic understanding toward people brought before him for trial. Accepted by the gang as a friend, Horton loans them funds to convert their roadhouse into a gala night-club, thus helping them to earn a living within the law.

Bradford Ropes wrote the screen play, Joseph Bercholz produced it, and Alexander Esway directed it. The cast includes Ruth Terry, Robert Livingston, Jack LaRue, Lola Lane, Isabel Jewell, Frank Jenks, Iris Adrian, Paul Hurst and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Within these Walls" with Thomas Mitchell**

(20th Century-Fox, July, time, 71 min.)

A fair program prison melodrama; it should satisfy those who enjoy this type of entertainment. The story is another version of the crime-does-not-pay theme, revolving around a penitentiary warden, who institutes strict rules to restore discipline among the prisoners only to find himself morally compelled to enforce those rules when his own son becomes one of the inmates. One's interest is maintained fairly well, there is human interest to appeal to the emotions, and there is considerable suspense in a few of the situations, particularly those in which the warden shoots it out with a group of convicts attempting a jail break, after they had cold-bloodedly murdered his son. A romance between the warden's daughter and a model convict is worked into the plot:

Thomas Mitchell, a stern, criminal jurist, is asked to take charge of the state penitentiary to rid the institution of convict riots and wholesale corruption. Arriving at the prison with Mary Anderson, his daughter, and Eddie Ryan, his seventeen-year-old son, Mitchell is greeted by the prisoners with boos. He takes charge with a vengeance, dismissing corrupt guards, depriving the unruly inmates of special privileges unless earned, and punishing disobedient men by placing them in solitary confinement. Meanwhile his son, a wayward youngster, who had gotten himself into debt, accepts bribes from the convicts in return for special favors. Learning that the boy was instrumental in arranging an attempted prison break, Mitchell berates him and sends him away to college. But the boy's association with the convicts had left its mark on him, and he soon leaves college to lead a life of crime. Months later, he shows up in the prison lineup, sentenced to serve a ten-year term for robbery. Mitchell, though heartbroken, determines that the boy shall be shown no special privileges, even going so far as to place him in solitary confinement when he becomes unruly. A group of convicts, learning that Ryan was the warden's son, involve him in an attempted jail break, during which the boy, in an effort to save his father, sacrifices his own life. Embittered, Mitchell avenges the boy's death by single-handedly wiping out the offenders. Mellowed by the loss of his son, Mitchell comes to the realization that discipline must be tempered with kindness to mould effectively the characters of young men.

Eugene Ling and Wanda Tuchock wrote the screen play, Ben Silver produced it, and Bruce Humberstone directed it. The cast includes Mark Stevens, B. S. Pully and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



### **"The Great John L" with Greg McClure, Linda Darnell and Barbara Britton**

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 96 min.)

This dramatization of the life of John L. Sullivan, which is Bing Crosby's first independent production, is a fine human-interest drama, the sort that should go over very well with the rank and file. It has all the ingredients needed for mass appeal—heart-tugging situations, romance, good comedy, realistic and exciting prizefights, and pleasant music with a nostalgic flavor. Moreover, it has expert direction and fine performances by the cast. Greg McClure, as Sullivan, is a promising newcomer; his portrayal of the Boston "Strong Boy" is extraordinarily convincing and sympathy-winning, even though his actions are not always pleasant.

The well-written story takes in Sullivan's early days as an unknown fighter, his rise to the world's championship, his defeat by James J. Corbett, his decline as the result of drink, and his eventual reformation in which he becomes an exponent of clean living. All this serves as a colorful background for the main story line, which concerns itself with the two women in Sullivan's life—Kathy (Barbara Britton), his childhood sweetheart, who refused to marry him, although she loved him, because of his boastful attitude and of his addiction to drink, and Anne (Linda Darnell), an actress, who loved him dearly, but whom he married in a fit of temper when his sweetheart, despite his becoming champion, still refused to become his wife. Sullivan's recognition of Anne's love and loyalty, and his inability to forget his love for Kathy, result in his taking to drink and his eventual downfall. Both women win the spectator's sympathy, because of their display of fine character and of their willingness to help the man they love, despite his human failings. A tragic note is injected by Anne's death, which paves the way for Sullivan and Kathy to reunite.

Worthy of mention is an outstanding comedy sequence in which Sullivan, visiting Paris, is challenged to a fight by a Frenchman half his size, a *la sarotte* (feet-fighting) champion. The manner in which he befuddles Sullivan and gives him a thorough licking is highly hilarious. The production values are very good; it is apparent that painstaking care was taken to give the gaslight era depicted an authentic air. As a matter of fact, everything about the entire production shows painstaking care.

James Edward Grant wrote the screen play and co-produced it with Frank R. Mastroly. Frank Tuttle directed it. The cast includes Otto Kruger, Wallace Ford, George Matthews, Robert Barrat, Lee Sullivan, Fritz Feld and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Divorce" with Kay Francis, Bruce Cabot and Helen Mack**

(Monogram, June 1; time, 72 min.)

Good program entertainment, suitable for the top half of a double bill in secondary houses. The story, which revolves around the efforts of a wealthy, sophisticated divorcee to break up the marriage of her childhood sweetheart, is not particularly novel and the outcome is quite obvious; however, one's attention is held because it directs some human appeal and it has good performances. It has some unpleasantness caused by the conduct of Bruce Cabot, as the erring husband, who leaves his happy home, wife, and two children for Kay Francis, who uses her wealth to hold his love; one is not in sympathy with Cabot for deserting his family, even though he eventually returns to it, giving up Kay. The most sympathetic character is Helen Mack, as the wife, who sacrifices her happiness for her children:—

After divorcing her fourth husband, Kay Francis returns to Hillsboro, her home town, to renew old friendships. There, she attends the wedding anniversary celebration of Helen Mack and Bruce Cabot, her childhood sweetheart. Her love for Cabot rekindled, Kay sets out on a campaign to steal him from Helen and their two children. She en-

trenches herself with Cabot by forming a large real estate syndicate and by making him her partner, causing him to become one of the most important men in town. Helen eventually realizes that Kay was trying to break up her home, and she compels Cabot to choose between them. He chooses Kay. Despite the efforts of friends to avert a divorce, Helen is granted an interlocutory decree. Cabot embarks on a gay time with Kay, neglecting to visit his children, who looked forward to seeing him. Helen refuses to accept his alimony checks, and humiliates him by working as a clerk in a department store to support herself and the children. Realizing that Cabot had become remorseful, and that his love for her was beginning to wane, Kay tries to induce him to leave town with her in the hope that he would forget his family. But his attachment for Helen and the children proves too strong, and he returns home to beg their forgiveness. Kay, defeated, leaves Hillsboro alone.

Sidney Sutherland and Harvey E. Gates wrote the screen play, Jeffrey Bernard and Kay Francis produced it, and William Nigh directed it. The cast includes Craig Reynolds, Larry Olsen, Johnny Calkins, Jerome Cowan, Ruth Lee, Mary Gordon and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Don Juan Quilligan" with William Bendix, Joan Blondell and Phil Silvers**

(20th Century-Fox, June; time, 75 min.)

Not an extraordinary comedy, but it offers fairly good program entertainment for audiences that are not too critical. The story is a preposterous affair, revolving around a dim-witted barge captain, who gets himself so involved with two girls, each of whom possessed a virtue that reminded him of his departed mother, that he finds himself married to both of them. The manner in which he tries to get out of this predicament only to find himself in deeper trouble is such a hodge-podge of nonsense that it leaves one more confused than entertained. It does have some amusing twists, and a few of the situations should draw peals of laughter, but, on the whole it has too many dull stretches. Its box-office chances will have to depend on the players' drawing power:

William Bendix, a barge captain, falls in love with Joan Blondell, a New York girl, because her voice reminded him of his mother, and with Mary Treen, a Utica girl, because her cooking was like his mother's. He gets himself engaged to both girls, who were unaware of each other's existence, but delays marrying either of them. Matters become complicated when a neighbor of Mary's, visiting a New York nightclub, sees Bendix with Joan and accuses him of being a "two-timer." Phil Silvers, Bendix's pal, comes to the rescue by concocting a story about Bendix having a twin brother. Both girls accept the story as true. Bendix, however, soon finds himself in a jam when each of the girls, using trickery, marries him. While worrying over his predicament, Bendix finds a dead man on his barge, deposited there by a gang of thieves. Silvers, hitting upon a bright idea, suggests that they dress the body in one of Bendix's suits, drop it overboard, and write a suicide note to make it appear as if Bendix's "twin brother" had killed himself, leaving Mary a widow. The scheme backfires, however, when the body is found and when Mary accuses Bendix of murdering her "husband." Arrested and brought to trial, Bendix, after much difficulty, convinces the court that he did not have a twin brother. The judge dismisses the case, but holds him on a bigamy charge. But when he learns that Bendix had been tricked into the marriages, he dismisses the charge and advises the girls to seek an annulment before Bendix entered the Army, which had drafted him. Both women, however, promise to wait for him, and the picture ends with Bendix still in the same predicament.

Arthur Kober and Frank Gabrielson wrote the screen play, William LeBaron produced it, and Frank Tuttle directed it. The cast includes Anne Revere, B. S. Pully, Veda Ann Borg and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

tures mentioned in Montague's telegram as belonging to the 1945-46 season, is "Rusty," which, too, is a "B" picture. Since Columbia, because of its "elastic thinking" policy, will not tell the exhibitors in advance to which brackets these five program pictures will be allocated, let us try to figure it out for ourselves.

Briefly, the situation is this: Twelve pictures may be considered as allocated to the top twenty brackets, leaving a total of eight top bracket pictures still due to exhibitors. Nineteen "B" pictures have been allocated to the lower brackets, leaving a total of five still due out of a promised twenty-four. If Columbia should allocate to the top-twenty brackets the five "B" pictures that have not yet been set for release, the exhibitors' revenue will not be commensurate with the rentals paid; in fact, the possibility is that the pictures may be exhibited at a loss. On the other hand, if these five pictures should be placed in the lower brackets, where they belong, the exhibitor will find himself in the position of the shopkeeper who agreed to accept a quantity of hard-to-sell, inferior quality merchandise for the privilege of buying a definite quantity of saleable, high quality merchandise, only to end up with all the inferior goods but with only a small part of the quality merchandise. In other words, no matter which way Columbia allocates the remaining five pictures, the exhibitor gets the tail end.

But Montague is not satisfied with the mere non-delivery of a promised program. He adds insult to injury by boastfully informing the exhibitors that "Kiss and Tell," which, according to his statement, has been acclaimed as a great comedy, will be sold separate and apart from the 1945-46 program. But he has forgotten to tell you that "Kiss and Tell" was one of the properties from which the 1944-45 program was to be selected, nor has he told you that the picture has been "in the can" for over two months. Why was it taken away from the 1944-45 contract holders?

This action does not come as a surprise to HARRISON'S REPORTS; if you will read again the editorial on Columbia's record, which appeared in the March 31 issue of this paper, you will find the following remarks:

"... 'Kiss and Tell' is the only top-bracket picture now in production, but since Columbia has made no announcement that it will release it this season, HARRISON'S REPORTS ventures to say that, on the basis of Columbia's past performances, it will probably be withheld from the 1944-45 contract-holders, and offered for delivery in the 1945-46 season. And if 'Kiss and Tell' should turn out to be an outstanding production, there is a possibility that Columbia will give it the 'Song to Remember' treatment; that is, sell the picture separate and apart from any program, taking it away from such exhibitors as are entitled to it."

Guided by Columbia's consistent policy, HARRISON'S REPORTS ventures to say now that the same treatment—the "Song to Remember" and "Kiss and Tell" treatment—will probably be accorded to "Jacobowsky and the Colonel," which is another one of the important properties from which Columbia was supposed to select its 1944-45 program, and which it used to entice the current season's contract-holders, and which it will undoubtedly use again to entice prospective 1945-46 customers when it announces the forthcoming season's product.

The Columbia salesman may try to explain away his company's failure to deliver promised pictures by blaming it on the raw stock shortage. If he does, you can refute his argument by pointing, not only to "Kiss and Tell," but also to "The Bandit of Sherwood Forest," which, by Montague's own admission, is completed but is being held for the 1945-46 program. You can also point out that "She Had to Say Yes," a picture still in production, will be delivered during 1944-45. Surely, if raw stock could be found for the prints of this picture, it certainly could be found for the prints of the other two. Moreover, the company could have used the raw stock that went into the making of prints on "B" pic-

tures for the making of prints on top pictures, which is the type of product its customers were primarily interested in.

I can go on filling column after column with more facts about Columbia's injustices to the exhibitors, but space does not permit. Besides, most of you who have been reading this paper are fully aware of these injustices, for I have been calling them to your attention each time that they occurred. And I shall continue to call them to your attention until such a time as Columbia makes up its mind to deal fairly and squarely with its customers.

As it has already been said, the facts speak for themselves. The thoughtful exhibitor will study these facts and weigh them carefully. He will not be blinded by Columbia's usual tactics of starting and ending a season in a blaze of glory in the hope that the exhibitor may forget the injustices that he suffered during the intervening months.

There is one ray of hope in Montague's telegram; there is hope that Columbia may change its tactics. There is hope that, in the future, when an exhibitor signs a Columbia contract, he will get, not only the "B's" but also the "good pictures." Why? Because Montague, who is celebrating his twentieth anniversary as Columbia's general sales manager, confesses in his telegram that he has just learned about the exhibitor's point of view. He says: "They tell me there is nothing of more interest to any theatre operator than really good pictures. . . ."

Perhaps a bit late, Abe, but now that you know it, let's see what you will do about it.

### **"West of the Pecos" with Robert Mitchum and Barbara Hale**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 66 min.)

Where western melodramas are liked, this should go over fairly well as a supporting feature. It has interesting outdoor shots, fast action, exciting gunplay, and good horseback riding. The story, based on the Zane Grey novel, was produced once before by RKO in 1934 with Richard Dix, and this version remains substantially the same. It is not greatly different from the usual story used in westerns, but it has considerable suspense, because of the constant danger to the hero, and good comedy touches as the result of the heroine's masquerading as a young boy. The romantic interest is pleasant:—

Ordered by his doctor to take a rest from business, Thurston Hall, accompanied by Barbara Hale, his daughter, and by Rita Corday, her French maid, leaves Chicago and heads for his ranch in Texas. En route, their stage coach is held up by bandits, who shoot the driver. The wounded man is found by his friends, Robert Mitchum and Richard Martin, who learn the name of the killer just before he dies. Meanwhile Barbara, arriving in a town nearby the ranch, encounters rough people and, to protect herself, she decides to dress and pose as a young boy. She is present when Mitchum rides into town, seeks out the murderer, and kills him. Harry Woods, leader of the gang, which posed as vigilantes, determines to even matters with Mitchum by blaming him for the murder of the coach driver. Later, when Barbara and her party get lost in the desert on their way to the ranch, Mitchum and Richards come to their rescue, and both accept her father's offer of employment. Mitchum, believing Barbara to be a boy, treats her in brotherly fashion; she falls in love with him. Still playing her masculine role, Barbara endures several embarrassing situations until Mitchum accidentally discovers her identity. He falls in love with her and, after many complications during which the bandits try to kill him, he finally proves his innocence to the authorities, rounds up the gang, and wins Barbara for his bride.

Norman Houston wrote the screen play, Herman Schlom produced it, and Edward Killy directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.



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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 1945

No. 24

### HEALTHY COMPETITION FROM ACROSS THE SEA

Since his arrival in this country two weeks ago, Mr. J. Arthur Rank, head of many major British film interests and president of the British Film Producers Association, has made some very significant remarks regarding his plans and his hopes to secure maximum playing time from the American exhibitors for his British-made productions.

Unlike some British film industryites who have repeatedly charged that American distribution and exhibition interests are scheming to keep British pictures off the American screens, Mr. Rank, without whining and without charging that the American film industry was seeking to stifle British competition, has stated that he has no complaints to make about the reception accorded his pictures by the exhibitors in this country. He admitted that many American exhibitors have shunned British pictures because too few of them have been suitable in entertainment value for American audiences. For this condition, the fault lies not with the American exhibitors, but with the British producers. Mr. Rank hopes to remedy the condition and to eliminate all resistance against British product by delivering pictures that will suit American tastes.

He admitted frankly that the British producers have a good deal to learn about the tastes of American picture-goers, and he added that British pictures have not been popular in the United States because "we have not studied the situation enough."

At a luncheon tendered to him by the Independent Theatre Owners Association of New York, Mr. Rank was told that the American exhibitors were eager to give British pictures considerable playing time, provided the pictures are of sufficient high calibre to be worthy of it. Without hesitation he replied that the quality of British films has already improved so much that, in England, many of them are out-grossing American pictures, and that, before long, British pictures may out-gross the Hollywood product even in the United States. He went on to explain that this development should serve the interests of the exhibitors, for it will undoubtedly create friendly competition between the British and American producers, who will vie with each other constantly in an effort to produce better pictures.

The policy Mr. Rank proposes to follow in order to secure more playing time from the American ex-

hibitors is indeed gratifying to HARRISON'S REPORTS, because for many years this paper has assured the British producers that the American exhibitors harbored no national prejudices and that they were more than willing to exhibit British pictures so long as their entertaining qualities and star values were such as would attract American picture-goers.

Mr. Rank has the right idea. He realizes that the product he manufactures for sale must conform as nearly as possible to the tastes and desires of his customers. If he wants American exhibitors as customers, he must supply them with product that will please and satisfy their patrons. It will not do for him to design that product merely to please his own fancies.

The exhibitor, being in close contact with his patrons, knows what they want, and if Mr. Rank and the other British producers will satisfy the wants of the exhibitors, they will satisfy the ultimate purchasers—the public.

HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that Mr. Rank has made a fine start toward securing more playing time for his pictures in this country, and it urges the independent exhibitors to support him whenever he delivers a picture worthy of exhibition in their theatres. It is through such support that Mr. Rank's producing organizations can become definite competitive threats to the American producers. And once the American producers find their supremacy challenged, you may be sure that the independent exhibitors can look forward to a competitive market that will give them, not only better selectivity of pictures, but also a better bargaining position.

This paper wishes to make one further suggestion to Mr. Rank, namely, that, in addition to studying the likes and dislikes of the American picture-goers, he study also the unfair tactics that the American producer-distributors have been and still are practicing on the exhibitors of this country, tactics that have resulted in constant strife between buyer and seller. A thorough study of these tactics should enable Mr. Rank to formulate a sales policy that will be free of unfair and oppressive practices, to the ultimate benefit of both the exhibitors and himself.

The American exhibitors are ripe for a square deal, and Mr. Rank can gain their undivided support by giving them just that.

HARRISON'S REPORTS welcomes the competition Mr. Rank proposes to bring to the American film industry, and wishes him every success.

### **"Incendiary Blonde" with Betty Hutton, Arturo de Cordova and Barry Fitzgerald**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 113 min.)

Very good mass entertainment. It is a musical melodrama, in Technicolor, based on the life of Texas Guinan, colorful night-club queen of the prohibition era. Combining music, comedy, dancing, romance, gangster warfare, and even a Wild West Show, the story is a well-knit affair that allows Betty Hutton, as Texas, ample opportunity to prove her dexterity as an actress; her performance is the mainstay of the picture. The action traces Texas' rise as a Rodeo star, as a chorus girl, as a musical comedy star, as a movie star, and finally as a reigning night-club queen, whose patrons delighted to hear her call them "suckers." It has many exciting, as well as tender, moments, and one is deeply sympathetic towards Texas because of her unfulfilled romance and of her awareness that she had but a short time to live. Her devotion to her family endears her to the audience. The production values are lavish, the music lively and nostalgic, and the dance ensembles exceptionally good:—

When her improvident father (Barry Fitzgerald) loses his money in a poor investment, Texas, a high-spirited girl of nineteen, decides to become the family breadwinner. An expert horsewoman, she joins a Wild West show owned by Bill Kilgannon (Arturo de Cordova), a gambler, and soon becomes the show's main attraction. Bill and Texas fall in love, but he does not encourage her because he had a wife who was confined to a sanitarium. When Bill rejects her love, Texas, unaware of his reasons, leaves the show in a huff and marries Tim Callahan (Bill Goodwin), a press agent. Tim helps her reach stardom on Broadway, but divorces her when he realizes that she still loved Bill. Meanwhile Bill had become an impoverished Hollywood producer, and when Texas learns the truth about his wife, who had died, she gives up her stage career to join him. She becomes a movie star under Bill's tutelage, helping to finance the company. Her father, however, sells fake stock in the company, and Bill, to save him from jail, is compelled to buy out Texas' interest through trickery in order that she be spared the truth. Texas, misunderstanding, returns to Broadway where she becomes a night club queen. Bill manages to buy a half interest in the club, and Texas, learning the truth about the fake stock, reconciles with him and plans for an early wedding. Just before the ceremony, however, Bill shoots it out with two gangsters who were trying to "muscle in" on the club, killing both men. He is sent to jail, and Texas, who had promised to wait for him, dies before he is released.

Claude Binyon and Frank Butler wrote the screen play, Joseph Sistrom produced it, and George Marshall directed it. The cast includes Charles Ruggles, Albert Dekker, Maurice Rocco, the Maxellos and others. Unobjectionable morally.

### **"A Thousand and One Nights" with Cornel Wilde, Phil Silvers and Evelyn Keyes**

(Columbia, July 19; time, 92 min.)

Good. It is an Arabian Nights fantasy, in Technicolor, somewhat similar to such pictures as "Sudan," "Cobra Woman," and "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," produced by Universal in recent years; but what makes this one more entertaining is the excellent comedy contributed by Phil Silvers. As a pickpocket "born one thousand years before his time," Silvers provokes considerable laughter by his use of modern "jive-talk" as he cavorts about ancient Bagdad. One of the really hilarious sequences is where he "kibitzes" a gin rummy game between two palace guards. Modern touches have been injected into the story, giving it a number of amusing, novel twists. The production values are very good, and there are, of course, harem sequences and beautiful girls to enhance the usual oriental splendor found in pictures of this type. The picture will require considerable exploitation, for the players mean little at the box-office:—

Cornel Wilde, the "Frank Sinatra" of his day, becomes enamored of Adele Jergens, the Sultan's daughter, and sneaks into the palace to woo her. He is discovered and, together

with his pal, Phil Silvers, is thrown into jail. Adele arranges for their escape into the desert, where they meet an old hermit who tells Wilde of a magic lamp, reposing in a mountain cave, which could grant his every wish. Their search for the lamp takes Wilde and Silvers through many dangers before they succeed in obtaining it. When Wilde rubs the lamp, an alluring Genie (Evelyn Keyes) appears and offers to do his bidding. Wilde instructs her to transform him into an Hindustan prince so that he could return to the palace and marry the princess. Meanwhile, at the palace, the Sultan had been abducted by his villainous twin brother (both played by Dennis Hoey), who had taken his place on the throne and had promised the Princess to Phil Van Zandt, his accomplice. With Wilde's arrival at the palace, there follows a series of wild adventures, during which he loses the lamp and almost loses his head, but he recovers the lamp in time to restore the throne to the real Sultan, thus winning his approval to marry the princess.

Wilfred H. Pettitt, Richard English, and Jack Henley wrote the screen play, Samuel Bischoff produced it, and Alfred E. Green directed it. The cast includes Gus Schilling, Richard Hale, John Abbott and others.

### **"Junior Miss" with Peggy Ann Garner**

(20th Century-Fox, August; time, 94 min.)

This screen version of "Junior Miss," which was a highly successful Broadway stage play, is a thoroughly delightful, heart-warming comedy of family life. The action is breezy, the dialogue bright, and the production, acting, and direction, first rate. Although primarily a comedy, there is considerable human interest in it, and at times it is quite sentimental. Most of the action revolves around an imaginative thirteen-year-old girl, played brilliantly by Peggy Ann Garner, whose well-intentioned attempts to arrange other people's lives result in a series of highly amusing crises and misunderstandings that keep one laughing all the way through. Considerable comedy is provoked by the wrangling between Peggy and her elder sixteen-year-old sister, and by the parade of the latter's juvenile suitors, who flit in and out of the family apartment at the most inappropriate times. The story is lightweight, but much of it is so true to life that audiences will chuckle with delight at some of the situations, comparing them with events in their own lives:—

Peggy, daughter of Allyn Joslyn and Sylvia Field, suspects her father of philandering with his employer's daughter (Faye Marlow), when she sees him engage her in an intimate conversation. Peggy hits upon a plan to "save" her happy home when Michael Dunne, her mother's younger brother, arrives unexpectedly after a mysterious absence of four years, during which he had taken a drinking cure. Imagining that Dunne had been in jail, Peggy, to remove the "threat" to her mother's happiness, promotes a match between him and Faye, hoping it would give Dunne a new lease on life, and would help Faye to get away from her domineering father (John Alexander). The meeting between the young couple culminates in their elopement just as Alexander plans to make Joslyn a junior partner in the firm. Learning from Peggy that Dunne had a "prison background," Alexander becomes infuriated, disowns Faye, and discharges Joslyn. Peggy, imagining her family faced with poverty, is inconsolable. A few days later, Alexander comes to Joslyn's apartment and demands to see Faye. Just then, Scotty Beckett, 'teen-aged son of Alexander's best client, telephones that he was on his way to the apartment to escort Peggy to a party. Hearing the name, Alexander believes it to be the elder Beckett, and assumes that Joslyn was about to steal him as a client. He changes his attitude hastily, granting Joslyn the partnership and forgiving Faye. He soon realizes his mistake when young Beckett arrives, but by that time a good feeling had been established and all rejoice as Peggy, looking lovely in her party dress, takes her boy-friend's arm.

George Seaton wrote the screen play and directed it, and William Perlberg produced it. The cast includes Mona Freeman, Connie Gilchrist, Barbara Whiting, Stanley Prager and others.



### **"Along Came Jones" with Gary Cooper and Loretta Young**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

A fairly good western. The amusing story, the presence of Gary Cooper, and the good direction, raises it to a level high above the average western. The picture suffers from many slow spots because of too much talk, but one does not mind the lack of action since the dialogue is quite witty. Cooper enacts the role of a mild-mannered, roving cowboy, clumsy with a gun, who finds himself mistaken for a notorious bandit. Most of the comedy is provoked by the manner in which he tries to live up to this dubious distinction, only to find himself hunted by an assortment of characters, including the bandit himself. William Demarest, as Cooper's saddle pal, is responsible for many laughs. Loretta Young, as the bandit's girl who falls in love with the awkward Cooper, is appealing and adds to the fun. It has a fair share of excitement and suspense:—

Riding into the small frontier town of Paynesville, Cooper and Demarest are amazed when the townspeople draw away from them and treat them with pronounced respect. Cooper, enjoying the fact that others were in awe of him, is astonished when Loretta Young embraces him suddenly and tells him to follow her out of town quickly, because several men had guns trained on him. Cooper and Demarest obey Loretta's instructions, accompanying her to her ranch. Arriving there, Cooper learns that he had been mistaken for Dan Duryea, a stagecoach bandit, who was being hunted by the Sheriff, a U.S. Marshal, an express company agent, and a group of ranch owners. Loretta, who was Duryea's sweetheart, intimates that she, too, believed Cooper was the bandit, and she advises him ride south quickly, hoping that he would draw the attention of the man-hunters, thus permitting Duryea, who was hiding nearby, a chance to escape. Cooper, however, suspects her motive and refuses to leave. Loretta, who felt obligated morally to Duryea but did not love him, finds herself falling in love with Cooper. She redoubles her efforts to get him to leave the country but to no avail. Cooper's stubbornness leads him into a series of complications, during which he becomes involved in the murder of the express agent, and rouses Duryea's jealousy over Loretta. Duryea, whose shooting prowess was unbeatable, gets into a gun duel with Cooper, a poor shot. Cooper misses Duryea with every shot while the bandit laughingly wounds him at will, but Loretta comes to the rescue by killing Duryea with a well-aimed shot. Completely bewildered, Cooper believes that Loretta meant to kill him but had shot Duryea by mistake. She brings him to his senses by shooting a hole through his hat, thus convincing him of her accuracy and of her love.

Nunnally Johnson wrote the screen play, and Gary Cooper produced it for International Pictures. Stuart Heisler directed it. The cast includes Frank Sully, Arthur Loft, Russell Simpson, Ray Teal and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Bedside Manner" with Ruth Hussey, John Carroll and Charles Ruggles**

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 79 min.)

Just moderately entertaining program fare. Aside from a few comical situations, there is not much to recommend in this romantic comedy-drama, for the story is on the ludicrous side, and the action unfolds at a listlessly pace. Moreover, the plot developments are obvious; one knows from the beginning just how the story will progress and end. Ruth Hussey and John Carroll strive to make something of their parts, but they are handicapped by the material. The chief trouble with the story is that the comedy is forced to a point of silliness, causing most of it to fall flat:—

En route to Chicago to work in a research laboratory, Ruth Hussey, a woman doctor, stops off at Blitheville, her home town, to visit her uncle (Charles Ruggles), one of the town's few physicians, who, because of war-time conditions and the shortage of doctors, was finding it difficult to take care of his many patients. Ruggles tries to induce Ruth to remain in town as his assistant, but she declines, informing

him that her heart was set on laboratory work in Chicago. Playing on her sympathy, Ruggles manages to persuade Ruth to help him for a few days, but, when he becomes convinced that she had no intention of remaining, he plans a campaign to keep her in town. He asks John Carroll, a test pilot, whom Ruth had treated for minor injuries suffered in a crash, to fake pantophobia (fear of everything), hoping that Ruth will stay to treat him. Carroll, who had fallen in love with her, gladly agrees to the scheme. Alarmed and feeling partly responsible for his condition, Ruth postpones her departure to make an intense study of his "affliction." She tries numerous methods to cure him but to no avail, finally determining that he needed a love life. Following her advice, Carroll pretends to have fallen in love with Ann Rutherford, and exaggerates to Ruth about his progress with the young lady. Ruth, finding herself jealous, comes to the realization that she had fallen in love with her patient. She confesses her predicament to her uncle, who inadvertently reveals that she had been tricked. Ruth avenges herself by putting Carroll through a series of medical tortures, but the finish finds them in each other's arms.

Frederick Jackson and Malcolm Stuart Boylan wrote the screen play, and Andrew Stone produced and directed it. The cast includes Claudia Drake, Esther Dale, Grant Mitchell, Frank Jenks, Bert Roach and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Conflict" with Humphrey Bogart, Alexis Smith and Sydney Greenstreet**

(Warner Bros., June 30; time, 86 min.)

An exceptionally good murder melodrama, revolving around a man who plans carefully every move connected with the murder of his wife so that he could commit a perfect crime. Although the spectator is let in on the killing, he is kept intrigued and even baffled by the psychological manner in which the murderer's resistance is gradually worn down, compelling him to visit the scene of his crime, where he is caught by the police. There is an undercurrent of excitement throughout the action as the killer comes across bits of evidence indicating that his wife still lived, while other incidents lead him to believe that he is suffering hallucinations. Humphrey Bogart, as the suave, cool murderer, is cast in a role that should delight his fans, and Sydney Greenstreet, as the psychiatrist who tracks him down, is very effective. It is not a cheerful entertainment, but it is intriguing:—

Bogart, an engineer, and Rose Hobart, his wife, looked upon by friends as a happy couple, quarrel when she accuses him of being in love with her younger sister (Alexis Smith). Bogart admits it. Returning from a dinner tendered to them by Sydney Greenstreet, a psychiatrist, Bogart suffers a leg injury in an auto accident. While convalescing, Bogart conceives a plan to murder his wife. He feigns lameness, though fully recovered, and, on a pretext, declines to accompany his wife on an auto trip to a mountain resort. He follows her soon after she leaves, blocking her car on a lonely road and killing her. He leaves her body in the car, which he pushes over a cliff. Returning home, he resumes his role of invalid and reports his wife missing. Greenstreet, hearing Bogart's description of his wife as he last saw her, becomes suspicious when he states that she was wearing a rose; Greenstreet had given her the rose after she left Bogart. Bogart loses no time trying to court Alexis, but she rejects his advances. While the police search for his wife, Bogart keeps finding evidence indicating that she was alive. The strain soon begins to tell on him and, when he sees a woman resembling his wife pass him on the street, he begins to question his own sanity. To put his mind at rest, he visits the murder scene, only to be caught by Greenstreet and the police, who had been waiting for him. Greenstreet reveals that he had devised the incidents that drove Bogart back to the scene of the crime.

Arthur T. Hornan and Dwight Taylor wrote the screen play, William Jacobs produced it, and Curtis Bernhardt directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

## PINE AND THOMAS' NEW CONTRACT

According to a trade paper report, Pine and Thomas, independent producers releasing their pictures through Paramount, have signed a new contract with Paramount to produce seven pictures for the 1945-46 season.

HARRISON'S REPORTS congratulates Pine and Thomas for their achievement but hopes that their 1945-46 season's pictures will be of a caliber approximating the quality of Paramount pictures, and not of the quality they have been so far delivering, which quality has been on about a par with the old Arrowhead pictures.

Because of the fact that the Pine-Thomas pictures are released through Paramount, they are sold as part of a block, with the result, naturally, that exhibitors are compelled to buy them, and at rentals that are far in excess of the rentals charged for pictures of similar quality distributed by the smaller independent companies. It is doubtful if many exhibitors would buy the Pine-Thomas pictures at the rentals Paramount is demanding if they were sold on a "Buy them if you like them" basis.

To prove this point, HARRISON'S REPORTS challenges Mr. Charles Reagan, Paramount's general sales manager, to sell them on that basis.

This paper wishes, of course, that Pine and Thomas, whose pictures have been almost of the same formula since they signed with Paramount, would improve the quality of their next season's product. In fairness to them, however, it should be pointed out that, comparing their pictures with the "B" pictures of other companies, they have not done bad work at all, for one-half of such pictures, of all companies, might well have been left in story form to die of old age on the shelves of their editorial departments.

The chief objection to such pictures is, not so much that they have been permitted to come into existence, but that they are forced on exhibitors as part of a block, at exorbitant rentals.

### **"Jungle Captive" with Otto Kruger, Jerome Cowan and Amelita Ward** (Universal, June 29; time, 63 min.)

A gruesome program horror picture, the sort that should easily satisfy the ardent followers of this type of entertainment. Its gruesomeness, however, and at times its repulsiveness, puts it in the "not for children" class. As a matter of fact, many adults, too, may find the proceedings repulsive, for the "ape-woman" character is hideous, as is the mad scientist's assistant, a ghoulish, half-witted handyman. Like most horror stories, this one, too, is far-fetched, and most of what transpires has been done many times, but it does succeed in generating considerable suspense:—

Otto Kruger, head scientist of a chemical-biological laboratory, perfects a method of restoring life to dead rabbits, and decides secretly to experiment with the corpse of an "ape-woman." Instructed to steal the "ape-woman's" body from the morgue, Rondo Hatton, Kruger's ghoulish handyman, murders a morgue attendant to accomplish his mission. Detective Jerome Cowan discovers a murder clue that leads him to Kruger's laboratory, where he finds reason to suspect Phil Brown, Kruger's youthful assistant, of involvement in the crime. Shortly after, Kruger lures Amelita Ward, his secretary and Brown's fiancée, to a lonely farmhouse, where he forces her to undergo a blood

transfusion that makes her deathly ill but brings the "ape-woman" back to life as a beautiful girl. Inspired by his success, Kruger plans to transplant Amelita's brain to the former "ape-woman's" skull. Meanwhile Brown, who had been searching for Amelita, finds a clue that leads him to the farmhouse. There, he is discovered and overpowered, tied to a chair, and compelled to watch Kruger prepare for the brain operation. Just as Kruger starts to operate on Amelita, the "ape-woman" reverts to her primitive savage state. She breaks the straps holding her to the operating table, and strangles Kruger to death. She turns to kill Amelita, but the young girl is saved by the timely arrival of Detective Cowan, who shoots the savage creature, killing her.

M. Coates Webster and Dwight V. Babcock wrote the screen play, Morgan B. Cox produced it, and Harold Young directed it. The cast includes Vicky Lane and others.

### **"One Exciting Night" with William Gargan and Ann Savage**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 63 min.)

A tiresome murder melodrama, with comedy; it will best serve as the lower-half of a mid-week double bill in theatres catering to indiscriminating patrons. There isn't much to the story, and what there is of it is so confusing and illogical that one loses interest in the action. Not much can be said for the comedy; it has a few amusing situations here and there, but the laughs are not very numerous, and these are not of the strong sort. Part of the action takes place in a wax museum, giving the picture a certain amount of eeriness, and it has a few suspenseful situations:—

Shortly after George Stone, a hunted criminal, is shot by George Zucco, who takes a package of diamonds from his pocket, the body is found by a policeman in an alley adjoining a wax museum. The body disappears while the policeman reports to headquarters, only to be found later by Ann Savage, a reporter, in her apartment above the museum. Seeking to score a "scoop," Ann hides the body amidst the wax figures in the museum, and telephones her paper for a photographer. Meanwhile William Gargan, a rival reporter, whom Ann loved despite their constant wrangling, arrives at the museum for a story on the missing body. Ann's photographer arrives at the same time and inadvertently indicates to Gargan that Ann was hiding the body. Gargan compels Ann to share the story with him, but, while they argue, Charles Halton, owner of the museum, and Leo Gorcey, his assistant, discover the body and decide to get rid of it. Ann and Gargan begin a search for the corpse, during which they are joined by Zucco, who identifies himself as an insurance detective, hired by diamond merchants to recover the stolen jewels. Zucco explains that he wanted to find the body and dispose of it so that he could keep the jewels for himself. He offers to share the loot with Ann and Gargan in return for their help. After a series of incidents, in which the body keeps reappearing and vanishing as all concerned search for it, and in which Zucco tries to murder Ann and Gargan, the young couple trap Zucco, recover the jewels, share the reward and the story, and agree to join forces for life.

David Lang wrote the screen play, Pine and Thomas produced it, and William C. Thomas directed it.

.Unobjectionable morally.



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Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

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Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 1945

No. 25

### Three Judges for the New York Anti-Trust Suit

The attorneys for the distributor-defendants in the Government's anti-trust suit, whose legalistic antics have succeeded in protracting the case ever since it was filed in 1938, almost did somersaults this past week, when they learned of the surprise move made by U.S. Attorney General Biddle, who, under the Expediting Act, filed a certificate in the New York Federal District Court asking that a special three-judge court be appointed to hear the case when it comes to trial, instead of its being heard by Judge Henry Goddard, alone.

Under the Expediting Act, the Attorney General, by certifying that the case was of general public importance, made mandatory the hearing of the case by three judges, of whom at least one had to be a circuit judge, that is, a judge of the Circuit Court of Appeals.

Accordingly, within a few days after Biddle filed the certificate, Judge Learned W. Hand, Senior Circuit Judge of the Federal Court of the Southern District of New York, ordered the appointment of the three-judge court, naming District Judge Goddard, who had been handling the case since its inception; District Judge John Bright, who was the presiding justice in the motion picture "extortion" case involving Willie Bioff and George Browne; and Circuit Judge Augustus N. Hand, whose profound legal background, and whose wide experience, particularly with the Government's suit against the aluminum trust, mark him as one highly qualified to judge the issues involved in the motion picture anti-trust suit.

It is apparent that the distributor-defendants' attorneys do not relish this latest move of the Government, for, according to reports in the daily trade papers, some of them resent the appointment of a three-judge court as a "departure" from accepted procedure, and they see little likelihood of it resulting in a speedier trial. In fact, they take pains to point out that this procedure may slow up the trial, because, as they claim, three judges, not one, will have to pass on the different motions that will be made during the course of the proceedings.

What seems to annoy these attorneys, though they do not say it in so many words, is that Judge Goddard, who thus far has been the sole judge and whose rulings have not been too unfavorable to them, will be reduced sharply in influence, for, under court procedure, Judge Augustus N. Hand, being a circuit judge, is a senior judge, and he automatically becomes the presiding judge.

A concise, yet comprehensive study of this latest move by the Government, and a review of the conditions that brought it about, are contained in a bul-

letin issued by Abram F. Myers, general counsel of Allied States Association, who has this to say, in part:

"It is not difficult for anyone who has followed this case since it was filed on July 20, 1938, to understand why the Attorney General felt it was his duty to take this action. The wonder is that he did not do so long ago. Those who read the brief as *amicus curia* [friend of the court] filed in behalf of the Conference of Independent Exhibitors on the Consent Decree will recall that it was there pointed out that the case was one of the class which, under the Act of Congress, should be so expedited.

"The critical comments from Big Eight ranks are understandable and were to be expected. By their extraordinary tactics they have staved off a determination of the suit for seven long years. But their claim (as reported by *Motion Picture Daily*) that the Attorney General's action will prolong the trial will not stand the test . . ."

Pointing to the distributor-defendants' "appalling record of delay," Mr. Myers states that "for two years after the suit was filed the proceedings were marked by interminable delays. Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold, testifying before a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on April 22, 1940, submitted a 22½ page memorandum containing a condensed outline of the legal fencing, demands for disclosure, dilatory proceedings and accommodations to counsel which had prevented a trial up to that day.

"When the case finally came on for trial in June, 1940, but before any testimony could be offered the proceeding was mysteriously halted and counsel entered upon protracted negotiations for a consent decree. The results of those labors, conducted behind closed doors, were finally made public and at a hearing before Judge Goddard entry of the proposed decree was opposed by every organized exhibitor group in the country. Nevertheless Judge Goddard signed the decree on November 20, 1940. The decree affected only five of the eight defendants.

"The defects, imperfections, inadequacy and injustice of the consent decree have been so many times set forth by Allied and other exhibitor groups, and especially by the Conference of Independent Exhibitors on the Consent Decree, that they need not be reshaped at this time.

"The decree provided a three-year test period which expired on November 20, 1943. It was not until January 20, 1944, that the five consenting defendants submitted their proposals for an amended and supple-

(Continued on last page)

### **"Captain Eddie" with Fred MacMurray and Lynn Bari**

(20th Century-Fox, September; time, 107 min.)

Biographical of the life of Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, this is a heart-warming, human interest drama, the sort that should go over well with most audiences, for it is the story of a man whose fine qualities, devotion to his family and friends, faith in the future, and courage, should prove an inspiration to every one. The producers deserve praise for the manner in which they have handled the story, for Rickenbacker's tenacity, perseverance, and determination to make good, are presented, not by preachment, but by action. It has plentiful human interest, a charming romance that remains appealing even after marriage, and good touches of comedy.

The story opens with the crash of Rickenbacker's plane in the Pacific in 1942, while on an important mission for the War Department. Huddled with his crew companions in three inflated rubber boats, Rickenbacker, whose faith in their eventual rescue never wavers, relives his life during the nineteen-day ordeal in mid-ocean, without either food or water. Through a series of flashbacks, his life is traced through his early days as a thirteen-year-old mechanically-minded boy, whose experiment with a home-made flying contraption off the roof of the family barn almost proves disastrous; as a boy-mechanic in an auto shop, shortly after his father's tragic death, when he spent his first week's wages for a ride in a crude bi-plane; as a young auto salesman, during which time he solved some of the flaws in the early automobile, and at which time he romanced with Adelaide, his wife-to-be; as an outstanding auto racing driver, whose fame led to an appointment as General Pershing's chauffeur in France; and as America's flying ace in World War I, when he shot down twenty-six German planes. Shown also is his rise as a leader in the air transportation field. The story closes with his rescue in the Pacific, vindicating his unwavering faith.

Through all this there are many strong dramatic and emotional situations, holding one's interest throughout. The acting of Fred MacMurray, as Rickenbacker, is outstanding; he plays the part with ease and conviction. Lynn Bari, as his wife; Mary Philips, as his mother; Charles Bickford, as his father; Darryl Hickman, as Rickenbacker the boy; James Gleason, as a pioneer auto salesman; Thomas Mitchell, as an auto builder, and Lloyd Nolan, as one of the ill-fated plane's crew, portray their individual roles effectively. The production values are good.

John Tucker Battle wrote the screen play, Winfield R. Sheehan produced it, and Lloyd Bacon directed it. Christy Walsh was associate producer. Others in the cast include Spring Byington and Richard Conte.

Suitable for all.

### **"The Woman in Green" with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce**

(Universal, July 27; time, 68 min.)

This is a routine "Sherlock Holmes" program murder-mystery melodrama, no better and no worse than the previous pictures in the series. This time the famed detective matches wits with his arch enemy, "Professor Moriarity," head of a blackmail-murder ring, which used hypnotism in the commission of their crimes. The story's development follows a pattern familiar to the series; that is, Scotland Yard finds itself stumped by the crimes, "Holmes" is called in on the case and, through his amazing but far-fetched powers of deduction, solves the murders and captures the criminals. It has a fair share of suspense, and there is the usual comedy provoked by the blustering antics of Nigel Bruce, as "Dr. Watson." Basil Rathbone, as "Holmes," gives his usual competent performance:—

Baffled by a series of "finger murders, Scotland Yard calls upon Holmes to solve the crimes. Holmes, aided by Dr. Watson, learns that, in each case, the victim was a young woman whose right thumb had been hacked off. Soon after, Sir George Fenwick (Paul Cavanagh) is found murdered, and a missing thumb is found on his person.

Holmes, sifting various clues, comes to the conclusion that the crimes had been committed by a blackmail ring. His investigation discloses that the ring was headed by his old enemy, Professor Moriarity (Henry Daniell), and that one of his confederates was a beautiful young woman, Lydia Marlow (Hillary Brooke), who had been associated romantically with Fenwick. Holmes learns also that Lydia and the Professor hypnotized wealthy men, like Fenwick, planted missing thumbs on them, and then convinced them that they had committed murder while suffering from amnesia. In a desperate attempt to rid herself of Holmes, Lydia lures him to her apartment and attempts to hypnotize him. Holmes, pretending to be mesmerized, follows Moriarity's orders when the criminal instructs him to walk along the parapet of a high roof. Just as he apparently prepares to step off into space, Dr. Watson and the police arrive suddenly and seize the gang. Moriarity, in a futile attempt to escape, plunges headlong from the roof to his death.

Bertram Millhauser wrote the screen play, based on the characters created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Roy William Neill produced and directed it. The cast includes Eve Amber, Mary Gordon, Frederic Worlock and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Story of G.I. Joe" with Burgess Meredith and Robert Mitchum**

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 109 min.)

Good. The late Ernie Pyle's "Story of G.I. Joe" comes to the screen as a genuine tribute to the American infantryman, without whom victory could not be achieved. The picture has a documentary-like quality, highlighted by human interest incidents in the lives of a group of foot soldiers, the sort that characterized Ernie Pyle's dispatches as a war correspondent. It is a war picture, but one of the best and, in view of the fact that Ernie Pyle's writings were probably the most widely read of any war correspondent, motion picture-goers who have become apathetic towards war pictures might feel differently about this one, not only because of Ernie Pyle's fame, but because it is an honest, void-of-Hollywood heroics account of the rigors, hardships, and heartaches endured by the average soldier, eloquently and realistically portrayed by an excellent cast.

The story is concentrated on the fortunes and misfortunes of a group of infantrymen, and it begins during the North African campaign as the men slog through mud and rain headed for their first taste of combat, which ends in defeat as they find themselves forced to retreat. Months later, the men, battle veterans by this time, join in the Sicilian campaign and, from there, fight there way to Cassino where, after being halted temporarily by deadly Nazi fire directed from a monastery observation post, they turn defeat into victory and start along the road to Rome.

Through all this Pyle, played superbly by Burgess Meredith, lives with the men and becomes their confidant, but at all times remains in the background, understandingly observing their despair and hopes, and hating the war that caused them untold suffering. The story has its humorous moments, but for the most part it is somber. Robert Mitchum, as the understanding Captain, whose death saddens his men, is exceptionally good, as is Freddie Steele, as the battle-hardened sergeant, whose greatest thrill was to listen to the recorded voice of his baby. There are numerous other emotional-stirring incidents, such as the wedding of a Red Cross nurse to one of the men in a battle-scarred church, and their honeymoon in an ambulance; Pyle's rustling up of a turkey dinner for the men on Christmas; the strain of battle causing Steele to lose his mind; and the personal tragedies when buddies fail to return from patrols. The battle sequences are particularly effective.

Leopold Atlas, Guy Endore, and Philip Stevenson wrote the screen play, Lester Cowan produced it, and William Wellman directed it. The cast includes Wally Cassell, Jimmy Lloyd, Jack Reilly, Bill Murphy and others.

There are some sex implications in one or two of the incidents, but it is doubtful if children will understand them.



### **"A Bell for Adano" with John Hodiak, Gene Tierney and William Bendix**

(20th Century-Fox, August; time, 104 min.)

As a novel, John Hershey's "A Bell for Adano" won the Pulitzer Prize, and as a stage production, it was hailed as one of the finest war plays. No less can be said of the screen version, for, despite its episodic quality and a few draggy sequences, it remains an absorbing human-interest drama, as well as a meaningful document concerning the problems that face the civil affairs officers of the Allied Military Government in their endeavors to restore a normal way of life to war-ravaged communities that had been under Fascist rule. Unlike most war pictures, which have become outdated owing to the Allied victory in Europe, this one, because of its subject matter, is timely.

Briefly, the story revolves around John Hodiak, as "Major Joppolo," who arrives in Adano, a war-torn Sicilian town, to become its administrator under AMG regulations. Although the most essential needs of the people are food and water, the Major finds that what they desired most was a new church bell to replace the one Mussolini had melted down for munitions. The Major, realizing that the bell was spiritually important to the people, promises to exert his greatest efforts to obtain one. He wins their respect and admiration by his sincere efforts in their behalf, and amazes them by his understanding of their problems, no matter how small, and by his democratic way of solving them. Matters become complicated for the Major when certain military orders issued by his commander threaten to cut off the town's water supply. Rather than have the people suffer, he countermands the order, with the result that he is recalled from his post. As the Major departs, firm in his belief that people are more important than rules, Adano's new bell begins to peal.

What gives the picture its interesting quality is its richness in characterizations and incidents, such as the Major convincing the people that it was far better to humiliate their former collaborationist-mayor than to lynch him; the meeting in the public square of the town's women and their returning Italian soldiers; the joy of the people when the Navy, in cooperation with the Major, hauls a huge bell into town; the grateful townspeople's party in honor of the Major, and their presentation to him of a life-sized portrait of himself—these and other incidents give the story many meaningful and emotional moments. It has considerable comedy too, provoked by the excitable nature of the Italian peasants. John Hodiak, as the Major, is militarily proper but warm and sincere, and William Bendix, as his loyal sergeant, contributes a telling performance. Gene Tierney, as a fisherman's daughter who reminds the Major of his wife, has little to do. Some of the others in the expert cast include Stanley Prager, Henry Morgan, Montague Banks, Marcel Dalio, Fortunio Bonanova, Henry Armetta, Roman Bohnen, Luis Alberni and Eduardo Ciannelli.

Lamar Trotti and Norman R. Raine wrote the screen play, Mr. Trotti and Louis D. Lighton produced it, and Henry King directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Naughty Nineties" with Abbott and Costello**

(Universal, July 6; time, 76 min.)

This slapstick comedy will have to depend on the drawing power of Abbott and Costello; as entertainment, it is just fair, with an appeal strictly for those who have not yet tired of this comedy team's gags and routines, most of which are a rehash of the ones used in their previous pictures. The story is so thin that, in order to pad it out to a full length feature, the producer had to use up some of the footage in the most stupid type of slapstick imaginable. In one sequence, for instance, almost ten minutes are devoted to men slapping, punching, and chasing each other; this is amusing for the first minute or so, but it soon becomes tiresome. In its favor is the fast action, as well as some tuneful songs:—

Henry Travers, Captain of a Mississippi River showboat, ties up at a river town and, despite the advice of Bud Abbott, his leading man, Lou Costello, his chief roustabout, and Lois Collier, his daughter, becomes friendly with three dubious characters—Alan Curtis, a gentleman gambler, Rita Johnson, his companion, and Joe Sawyer, their formidable bodyguard. All three had been ordered by the local police to leave town. The kind-hearted Captain entertains his visitors and promises to be their guest in a St. Louis gambling house when his boat docks at that port. Keeping his promise, the Captain visits the gambling house where Curtis and Rita, despite the efforts of Abbott and Costello to stop them, fleece the Captain in a crooked card game and win a controlling interest in the showboat. With a crew of crooks, the showboat sets sail again, much to the despair of the honest Captain, who is compelled to stand by and watch his craft operated as a gambling ship. Abbott and Costello, however, decide to take matters into their own hands and, by resorting to a series of slapstick stunts, throw the ship and its patrons into such a state of confusion that the gamblers find themselves compelled to vacate the boat and to restore its ownership to the Captain. Curtis, reformed by his experience, wins Lois' love.

Edmund L. Hartmann, John Grant, Edmund Joseph and Hal Finberg wrote the screen play. Mr. Hartmann and Mr. Grant produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Bewitched" with Phyllis Thaxter and Edmund Gwenn**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 65 min.)

This psychological drama is off the beaten path, but as entertainment it will probably have more of an appeal to the few than to the many. Based on Arch Oboler's story, "Alter Ego," it is a character study of a young girl with a dual personality—one sweet and kindly, and the other cruel and vicious. The manner in which she is plagued by her wicked self, and in which a psychiatrist frees her, not only from her undesirable personality but also a murder charge, is novel and, of course, fantastic. The picture has a somber mood throughout, and some parts of it, particularly where the girl commits the murder, are unpleasant. Its morbid theme, and the fact that the story is developed mostly by dialogue, make it doubtful entertainment for the masses. The production values are modest:—

A voice identifying itself as "Karen," and claiming to be another personality locked in her brain, plagues Phyllis Thaxter and promises never to bother her if she will leave her family and her fiance, Henry H. Daniels, Jr. Phyllis flees to New York where she tries to lead a happy, normal life. There she becomes friendly with Horace McNally, a young attorney, who proposes to her. Before Phyllis can decline his offer, "Karen's" personality overpowers her and compels her to kiss McNally passionately. Ashamed, Phyllis rushes to her rooming house, where she finds Daniels waiting to take her back home. "Karen," desiring McNally, overpowers Phyllis once again and compels her to stab Daniels to death. Brought to trial for murder, Phyllis refuses to defend herself, and is sentenced to die. McNally, as her attorney, enlists the aid of Edmund Gwenn, a noted psychiatrist, who studies Phyllis' case and comes to the conclusion that she had a dual personality. On the eve of the execution, Gwenn prevails upon the Governor to have Phyllis brought to his office for an examination. There, through hypnotism, Gwenn convinces Phyllis that she was stronger than "Karen," and then, speaking to "Karen," convinces her that she must die. When Phyllis comes out of her trance, it is evident that she had been cured and that only her own personality remained. The Governor, satisfied that justice had been done, releases Phyllis.

Arch Oboler wrote the screen play and directed it, and Jerry Bresler produced it. The cast includes Addison Richards, Kathleen Lockhart and others.

The sex situations and the murder make it unsuitable for children.

mental decree. These were so grossly unfair and inadequate that the Attorney General undoubtedly would have rejected them even if the C.I.E.C.D. and various public groups had not protested against them. After the Attorney General's rejection the defendants made no further move and the Attorney General on August 7, 1944, submitted his proposals for a decree. At a hearing before Judge Goddard on December 20, the defendants would not concede law violation even to the extent necessary to give the Court jurisdiction to arbitrate the differences between the parties as to the contents of the decree.

"The Government then followed the only course open to it and filed a motion for a temporary injunction and also asked that the case be set for trial on a day certain. Judge Goddard consented to hear these on March 5, 1945. At the hearing counsel for the defendants had a field day, wisecracking at the expense of Government counsel and those who had asked leave to file briefs as *amici curiae*. Judge Goddard stated that if he were to decide the matter at that time he would deny the Government's motion. He agreed, however, to receive additional briefs but he had not ruled on the motion up to the time the Attorney General's expediting certificate was filed. He granted the defendants' request that the trial go over until Fall and set it for October 8.

"One year and seven months after expiration of the test period and no action. In the meantime, the interminable grind of motions for disclosure, interrogatories, etc., etc., goes on."

In a reference to Judge Goddard, Mr. Myers points out that his inclusion in the specially constituted court will reduce his influence by  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent. "We do not," continues Mr. Myers, "impugn Judge Goddard's character or ability when we say that this will be welcomed by independent exhibitors who have such a vital stake in the proceedings and feel that they have not received consideration at his hands. . . . Trade paper accounts of the proceedings through the years have led those interested and observing laymen to wonder if the Government stood a chance in Judge Goddard's Court.

"The summary manner in which the hearing on the consent decree was conducted—especially his apparent grudging attitude toward counsel for large groups of exhibitors and the five-minute limitation imposed upon them—served to increase their feeling of uneasiness and doubt.

"But the main reason for this feeling grows out of the fact that a few years ago Judge Goddard denied a motion by the Government to compel certain of the defendants to disgorge theatres which they had acquired subsequent to the decree. It seemed to many exhibitors that in doing so Judge Goddard had, in effect, sanctioned those acquisitions and they wondered how he could fairly sit at the trial of a case in which the Government asks that the defendants be divested of all their theatres.

"None of these things necessarily means that Judge Goddard could not fairly decide the case on its merits. But from the public point of view it is as necessary that the administration of justice be maintained beyond question as it is that it be kept pure. . . ."

Mr. Myers' expert analysis of the distributor-defendants' "appalling record of delay" is indicative of the fact that there is only one way by which the exhibitor-producer disputes that have kept the industry in a turmoil can be settled, and that is through a final

adjudication of the issues by the Courts. The producer-distributors were given every opportunity to come forward with real concessions, but they responded with grudging half-measures. That the Government has grown tired of this dilly-dallying is evident from its latest legal move made this past week. A case certified to be heard by a three-judge court must, under the statute, be "in every way expedited."

It seems as though the independent exhibitors have now arrived at the point where the relief they have sought for many years has finally come into sight.

## THE BLACK SHEEP OF THE FAMILY

"Evidences of an improved set of public relations for the motion picture as a result of the industry's war efforts," says Terry Ramsaye, editor of *Motion Picture Herald*, in the June 9 issue, "begin to appear—and out where they count—among the people of the customer communities.

"The war drives and movements of all sorts from bonds to waste paper to blood banks have been increasing the contacts between exhibitors and the socially minded leaders of their territories. In many instances new contacts have been and continue to be created. . . ."

Mr. Ramsaye discusses the remarks of Mr. Henson M. Richey, of Loew's, who said: "Influential people who have never before given more than a casual thought to the motion picture are now aware of it—and conscious of the fact that the theatre down the street is part of it." He prints also the remark Mr. Will Hays made once, to the effect that "nobody is for the movies except the people."

That is the trouble with the industry's standing today—its services have been recognized by the people, but not by those who count—the Government officials. Did the people's recognition of the motion picture industry as a great factor in the life of the nation prevent the officials of the U.S. Government from putting it in a class with saloons when the Manpower Director promulgated his midnight closing order for the purpose of conserving electricity? Ask Henry Morgenthau, Secretary of the U.S. Treasury, what he thinks of the motion picture industry, and he will rise to its defense with a spontaneity that will amaze you. He will assure you that, without the work of the industry's components, the Government could never have sold so many billions of dollars worth of bonds. But what did he do to exempt it from the order of the Manpower Director? Nothing!

When it comes to regarding the motion picture industry as an important factor in the life of the nation, it is not public recognition that counts so much as it is recognition by the Government officials, and by Congress. Unless we gain that recognition, not only will the industry be considered by them as a wayward child, but also a crack-pot Congressman will, now and then after the war, rise from his seat and demand that it be chained and punished for doing what is contrary to his, probably warped, notion.

The next time the Secretary of the Treasury approaches the industry for its help on a new war loan, its leaders should assure Mr. Morgenthau, or whoever will be the treasurer at that time, that the industry could do a far better job if the admission taxes were reduced, or even eliminated, so as to attract many more potential bond buyers.

But will they do it? I fear that they will not!



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New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

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**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

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Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 1945

No. 26

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## An Impending Cycle of Crime Pictures

In an open letter to the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (Hays Office), producer-director Frank Borzage last week asked that organization to take steps to prevent an impending cycle of gangster and other crime films, stating that "nothing can do more harm to this country and the movie industry at this particular time."

I do not have available a copy of Borzage's letter, but from what is reported in the daily trade papers Borzage contends that, with the nation working on plans to bring peace, prosperity and good will to all the world, and with foreign countries looking to our country for guidance, it is "certainly an inopportune time for us to convey the impression that America is made up largely of gangsters, black market operators, petty racketeers and murderers." He points out also that the crime pictures of the early 1930's did much to distort the minds of people in other countries on the American way of life.

Mr. Borzage urged that the producers institute a system of voluntary censorship, so that future motion pictures would give the outside world "a true impression of the people who make up this great country," and he cited "Going My Way," "Song of Bernadette," and "Wilson" as motion pictures of which Hollywood might be proud.

It seems that Mr. Borzage was prompted to issue his admonition against gangster films, because he feared that a flood of such pictures might result from the box-office success of a "highly publicized gangster film recently released. . . ."

Trem Carr, executive director at Monogram, the studio which produced "Dillinger," resented Mr. Borzage's letter, apparently assuming that it was a direct attack on that picture. He, therefore, wrote to Mr. Borzage as follows:

"I have read with deep interest your open letter to the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association. It intrigued me no end. Since I am connected with the studio which made the picture to which you refer as 'a highly publicized gangster film recently released, and now doing tremendous business at the theatre box-offices all over the country,' I felt it advisable to point out the fallacies in your statement.

"I cannot agree fundamentally with your statement that foreign nations are looking to the United States for guidance from the motion picture industry. Our personal activity in the field of diplomacy is very limited, and it might be best to leave that work and that guidance in the hands of our State Department and

we in the motion picture business follow their recommendations, rather than try to set any pattern for them to follow.

"The best reason for having made this picture is pointed out by the paragraph in your letter that reads, 'As we know, our Justice Department has announced that a great increase in crime may be expected in this country after the war. Here the motion picture industry has the opportunity to help stamp out this crime wave before it begins.' We quite agree with this statement that you make. How shall we treat with this? Shall we bury our heads in the sand like ostriches, or shall we become realistic and approach this problem in the manner in which we may best cope with it?

"I don't think we would disagree on the power of motion pictures to tell a compelling story. The use of motion pictures by all of our service forces, both from an educational and propaganda standpoint, has proved most effective, and we believe that 'Dillinger' is proving most effective in awakening the public to the danger which might beset our nation after this war. Dillinger is depicted in this film as the cruel, inhuman, ruthless individual that he was. The work of the law enforcement bureaus in tracking him down is portrayed most effectively. At no time in this picture is sympathy aroused for this gangster in any sense. The moral that 'Crime Does Not Pay' is pointed out most clearly and interestingly. We at Monogram feel that if we have in any sense awakened the public's interest in this potential danger that follows every war, we have served a far greater purpose than your letter in criticizing the picture could possibly serve.

"The National Board of Review, Ten leading Women's Organizations, Open Road for Boys and Film and Radio Discussion Guide have endorsed this picture for its message, 'Crime Does Not Pay.'

"Yes, Hollywood has grown up, and Hollywood is assuming its responsibilities to face facts.

"By the way, Frank, have you had occasion to see 'Dillinger,' the picture you are criticizing?"

It seems to me that Trem Carr has misconstrued the meaning of Frank Borzage's letter to the MPPDA, for his answer to Borzage is no more than a defense of his studio for having produced the picture. Yet the statement of Mr. Borzage does not single out "Dillinger" for criticism as a picture. Assuming that he referred to "Dillinger" in mentioning "a highly publicized gangster film recently released," Borzage's purpose, I am sure, was to draw attention to the fact

(Continued on last page)

**"Rhapsody in Blue" with Robert Alda,****Joan Leslie and Alexis Smith***(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 139 min.)*

Excellent! Based on the life of George Gershwin, one of America's most popular musical figures, "Rhapsody in Blue" will undoubtedly prove to be one of the top box-office attractions of the season, for it has, not only a delightful musical score, which in itself is worth the price of admission, but also an inspiring, heart-warming story of the phenomenal rise of a lively East Side youngster, son of a humble, likable Jewish family. While some liberties have been taken with Gershwin's biography, particularly with regard to the romances in his life, the story is essentially a sympathetic study of a man who, because of his burning desire and ambition to express himself in terms of music, drove himself with such force that it led to his untimely death at the height of his career, while still a comparatively young man.

Beginning in New York's lower East Side in the early 1900's, the story depicts Gershwin's boyhood days at which time his mother bought a piano to teach her older son, Ira, how to play, little realizing that George, her younger son, had a talent for music. George becomes the one to receive piano lessons and, at the age of eighteen, encouraged by his family, he becomes a professional piano player and obtains employment as a "song plugger" in a music publishing house. There he meets and falls in love with Julie Adams (Joan Leslie), an ambitious young singer. Bored with his work as a "song plugger," Gershwin, who had already written a few songs of his own, takes his tunes to Max Dreyfus (Charles Coburn), another publisher, who gives him a contract. Through Dreyfus, "Swanee," one of Gershwin's songs, is introduced by Al Jolson (played by himself) in a Broadway show, and from then on success, money, and fame flood in on the young composer. Wanting desperately to write classical music, the sort that would live forever, Gershwin finds himself chained to Broadway by a succession of his own song hits. His friends spur him on. He writes "Rhapsody in Blue," a blend of both classical and popular music, and is hailed by the music world as a budding genius. Meanwhile his friendship with Julie had kept pace with the progress of his career, but he leaves her to go to Paris to study for the serious music he felt he must write. There, he falls in love with Christine Gilbert (Alexis Smith), an American girl, with whom he returns to the United States after writing his "An American in Paris." But Christine, an intelligent woman, realizes that music was Gershwin's one consuming interest, and decides to go out of his life. Rebuffed by Julie to whom he turns, Gershwin devotes himself wholly to his music as his only justification for living. But he drives himself with such unrelenting force that he soon becomes a sick man. Tortured by pain, and by the agony of being unable to produce music, the brilliant young composer dies.

A brief synopsis of the story cannot convey the story's many deep emotional situations or its richness in human interest and in comedy. Some of the most delightful passages in the film deal with the devotion and loyalty of the Gershwin family for one another. Gershwin is portrayed by a newcomer, Robert Alda, who gives an exceptionally good performance, playing the part with restraint and sympathetic under-

standing. Morris Carnovsky, as Gershwin's father, is a grand character, as is Rosemary De Camp, as his mother. Herbert Rudley, as Ira Gershwin, is convincing. As the young singer with whom Gershwin falls in love, Joan Leslie does the best work of her career; her singing of the Gershwin melodies, and her dancing, are among the outstanding highlights. Among those who had a part in Gershwin's career, and who appear in the picture as themselves, are Oscar Levant, who almost steals the picture with his bright, acid witticisms, and whose piano playing is stirring; Paul Whiteman, who conducts the symphonic premiere of "Rhapsody in Blue"; Al Jolson, who sings "Swanee" in his inimitable style; Hazel Scott, singing and playing the piano in a French cafe; Anne Brown, singing "Summertime" from "Porgy and Bess"; and Tom Patricola, who dances with Miss Leslie. Others in the cast include Julie Bishop as Ira's wife, and Albert Basserman, as Gershwin's professor.

The music, as it has already been said is delightful. No less than twenty-nine of Gershwin's tunes have been worked into the story, and all have been presented in brilliant fashion, without retarding the movement of the story.

Howard Koch and Elliot Paul wrote the screen play from an original story by Sonja Levien. Jesse L. Lasky produced it, and Irving Rapper directed it.

Suitable for all.

**"Why Girls Leave Home"****with Sheldon Leonard, Lola Lane and Pamela Blake***(PRC, release date not set; time, 68 min.)*

In spite of the fact that the story is familiar, this mixture of drama, popular music, murder-mystery, and crime melodrama, is a fairly good program entertainment. Obviously, the title was selected for its exploitation value, but it is too bad that a different one was not chosen, for it is somewhat misleading in that it gives one the impression that the picture is another juvenile delinquency film. Revolving around the misadventures of a young girl, who leaves her home and family to seek fame as a night-club singer, the story, part of which is told by the flashback method, deals with her involvement in several murders, including an attempt on her own life, before her eventual rescue by a live-wire reporter. The performances by the cast are good, but Pamela Blake, as the heroine, is outstanding; her singing is pleasing to the ear. William Berke's expert direction keeps the action moving at a fast pace, builds up the suspense, and holds one's interest throughout. Parts of the story, however, are somewhat sordid, and the character of the heroine is demoralizing, for she is shown as becoming a hardened entertainer, knowingly working in a night-club that was a "front" for a crooked gambling game in a back room:—

Sheldon Leonard, a reporter, rescues Pamela Blake from drowning and believes that some one had tried to murder her, despite the theory of the police that she had attempted suicide. While Pamela recovers in a hospital, Leonard investigates her background to learn who might have had a motive to kill her. His investigation discloses that Pamela wanted to become a jazz singer, and that, through Elisha Cook, Jr., a musician, she had obtained a job in a night club operated by Paul Guilfoyle with the aid of Lola Lane. On



her first night, Pamela had discovered that the night-club was a "front" for an illegal gambling establishment, and had witnessed the murder of two men who claimed that they had been cheated. Pamela wanted to give up her job, but Guilfoyle did not permit her to do so because she knew too much. Through Cook's machinations, Claudia Drake, the club's singing star, had been discharged, and Pamela had been chosen to replace her. Claudia had threatened to even matters with Pamela. When Pamela, pleased with her star status, had repulsed Cook's advances and had refused to show her appreciation to him for being instrumental in making her a star, he, too, had become peeved at her. Through Constance Worth, Pamela's roommate, Leonard learns that Pamela had eventually grown tired of her tawdry life, and had threatened to expose Guilfoyle's dubious activities. When an attempt is made on his own life, and when Claudia is found murdered, Leonard becomes convinced that Guilfoyle was behind the crimes. Meanwhile Lola and Guilfoyle, aware that Leonard was on their trail, spirit Pamela out of the hospital, intending to kill her to prevent their expose. Leonard arrives at the hospital just as they drive away. He gives chase, arriving at the night club in time to save Pamela. Cornered, Guilfoyle reveals that Lola was the real owner of the club, and that she had committed the different murders. Lola shoots Guilfoyle, but is overpowered as she attempts to escape.

Fanya Foss Lawrence and Bradford Ropes wrote the screen play, Sam Sax produced it, and William Berke directed it.

Not for children.

### **"Boston Blackie's Rendezvous" with Chester Morris**

(Columbia, July 5; time, 64 min.)

A routine program melodrama, which is somewhat unpleasant because it revolves around the machinations of a homicidal maniac. In substance, the story is practically identical to the other pictures in the "Boston Blackie" series, with Chester Morris, as the reformed crook, being suspected of the crime, and outwitting the police in order to prove his innocence. For comedy, there is the usual by-play between Morris and Richard Lane, the police inspector, but most of this is so familiar that one finds little to laugh at. Even Morris' escapes from the police, by means of a masquerade, are unimpressive, for the same trick has been employed in the last few pictures of the series:—

Steve Cochran, a wealthy, homicidal maniac, escapes from the institution to which he had been confined, in order to contact Nina Foch, a dance hall hostess, with whom he had been corresponding but whom he had never met. Harry Hayden, Cochran's uncle, disturbed over the young man's escape, asks Chester Morris, his old friend, to locate him without publicity. Shortly after Hayden leaves, Cochran, who had followed him there, confronts Morris and knocks him unconscious. He changes into one of Morris' suits and goes to the dance hall to see Nina. Finding that Nina was out of town that night, Cochran, emotionally upset, makes a date with another hostess. He takes her to a lonely spot in the country and strangles her. Meanwhile Morris, with the aid of his pal, George Stone, traces Cochran to the dance hall and learns that the maniac had left with another hostess. Fearing for the girl's safety, Morris notifies the police. He

tracks Cochran to the scene of the crime and, just as he finds the body, police inspector Lane arrives and arrests him for the murder. Morris manages to convince Lane of his innocence and, after gaining his release, hurries to Nina's apartment to warn her against Cochran, but, before he can explain his identity, she mistakes him for the maniac and drives him off with her screams. Inspector Lane arrives, and Nina describes the man who had frightened her, convincing Lane that Morris was the strangler. After the police leave, Cochran enters Nina's apartment and, posing as Morris, convinces her that he was working with the police and induces her to come to his hotel room. Morris, learning that Cochran had taken Nina to the hotel, rushes there only to fall into the hands of the police. He escapes them and, after a furious chase, manages to save Nina just as Cochran is about to kill her. The police help him to overpower the maniac.

Edward Dein wrote the screen play, Alexis Thurn-Taxis produced it, and Arthur Driefuss directed it. The cast includes Frank Sully, Iris Adrian and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"I'll Tell the World" with Lee Tracy and Brenda Joyce**

(Universal, June 8; time, 61 min.)

For audiences who are not too particular about story material, this breezy program comedy with music should prove to be entertaining. Lee Tracy, as a fast-talking insurance salesman, is cast in the type of role that brought him fame. The manner in which his glibness gets him into numerous predicaments causes the comedy. The story is rather silly, but since it is fast-moving, and since music and a few specialty numbers have been worked into the plot, it manages to entertain one for an hour:—

Gifted with an ability to speak rapidly and descriptively, Lee Tracy, a brash insurance salesman, wrests the microphone from a radio announcer at a football game and broadcasts a play-by-play description of the contest to the listening audience. Raymond Walburn, president of the radio station, and June Preisser, his daughter, are so impressed by Tracy's glib manner that they send for him. Tracy's arrival at the studio and his constant chattering interfere with an audition by Brenda Joyce, a singer and student of psychology. Brenda, furious, berates Tracy. To make amends, Tracy offers to help her get a job with the radio station. He gets himself into all sorts of predicaments while trying to advance her career, but his efforts meet with no success. He falls in love with Brenda and, with her help, becomes a "philosopher" on the station's "advice to the lovelorn" program. His glib manner of speech, coupled with Brenda's knowledge of psychology, makes the program sensational, and Walburn, in order to sign him to a contract, offers to make him vice-president of the company. Meanwhile Tracy inadvertently ruins another audition for Brenda, causing her to leave him. Unable to broadcast on the lovelorn program without Brenda's aid, Tracy fakes laryngitis. Brenda, feeling responsible for his condition, returns, only to become even more peeved when his voice is restored miraculously. But, before she can leave him again, the loquacious Tracy talks her into marrying him.

Henry Blankfort wrote the screen play, Frank Gross produced it, and Leslie Goodwins directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

that the success of this picture might well bring about a cycle of crime pictures, the ultimate result of which would be to give a distorted view of life in America to the people in foreign lands.

Borzage knows what he is talking about, for experience has shown that, every time a certain type of picture has made a success, rival studios quickly put into preparation stories of a similar theme, in order to cash in on what they believed to be a new trend in the entertainment desires of the picture-going public. As a matter of fact, a recent issue of weekly *Variety* carried a report that the "grossing power of a \$200,000 budgeter, such as 'Dillinger,' which now looms as a \$1,000,000 grosser, has 'alerted' major studios where 37 showings of the film have already been reported held for production staffs in an effort to analyze the b.o. values. (There have been eight staff screenings at one studio alone)."

HARRISON'S REPORTS has maintained for years that a large percentage of American pictures, particularly of the crime pictures, misrepresents the American nation to the peoples of foreign countries. When the producers adapt vicious, sordid story material for pictures, the harm caused to this country by the false impression of our national character created abroad far outweighs the monetary gain from foreign sales.

Trem Carr says that "in the field of diplomacy . . . it might be best to leave that work in the hands of our State Department, and we in the motion picture business follow their recommendations, rather than try to set any pattern for them to follow." While diplomacy in this country's relations with other countries is properly the work of our State Department, it does not relieve a producer of his moral obligation to use the utmost care in selecting material to be put into pictures, particularly when those pictures touch upon our American way of life.

In point is an editorial of this paper written in 1939, dealing with Frank Capra's failure to exercise discretion in producing "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington." I said then that, "under the democratic system of our Government, a citizen may employ his right to express his opinion without molestation, so long as he does not violate the law. The right of the citizen to express his opinion freely, however, places on him certain moral obligations. One of such obligations, for example, is to use discretion if the exercise of that right should wound the feelings of other citizens, or if he should present the United States of America abroad in a bad light. He is not compelled to restrain himself by law; he must do so as a result of his ability to discern when his words, his criticisms, may hurt the nation itself—lower it in the estimation of people, abroad as well as at home, particularly abroad."

As Trem Carr says, none can disagree on the power of the motion picture to tell a compelling story, and its use, both from an educational and propaganda standpoint, has proved most effective. We should, therefore, look upon our motion pictures as "ambassadors" in foreign lands—"ambassadors" bearing no credentials but exerting great power. That power should be used, not to libel and villify our own country, but to represent America more in accordance with the truth. And the responsibility for the use of this power lies with the American producers, for it is through their depiction of American ways and cus-

toms that the people of foreign countries will form either an adverse or a favorable opinion of the character of the American people.

The producers, however, should not concern themselves only with the adverse effect a cycle of gangster pictures might have in foreign countries. They should remember also that crime films, when produced in number, despite the "crime does not pay" moral they expound, exert a disastrous influence upon the youth of our own country, for an excess of such pictures will turn the screen into a school of crime, undermining the morale of those with delinquent tendencies, and causing some of them to adopt the brutal, resourceful methods employed by the gangsters in their commission of the crimes portrayed on the screen.

No one knows better than the exhibitors of this country just how seriously the industry was affected by the crime pictures that were rampant in the 1930's. At that time the moral quality of pictures was so low that it brought down the unified wrath of religious and other organizations upon the entire industry, with the result that the public stayed away either from all pictures or from most of them, and kept their children away from them altogether.

The exhibitors cannot now afford to experience a recurrence of the situation in the 1930's. And the way to prevent it is to lodge a protest now with the producer-distributor representatives, nipping in the bud any contemplated plans for a cycle of crime pictures.

### ALLIED OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA ENDORSES HARRISON'S REPORTS

In an organization bulletin, dated June 18, Sidney E. Samuelson, general manager of the Allied Independent Theatre Owners of Eastern Penna., Inc., had this to say:

"Recently, Abe Montague, General Sales Manager of Columbia, sent many exhibitors throughout the country a three-page telegram from Los Angeles. In it, Montague repeated the extravagant promises about the Columbia product. I will not comment upon the use of telegraph facilities for this totally unnecessary purpose during war time. Obviously, this abuse of the overburdened communication facilities of the nation bothered neither Mr. Montague nor his conscience.

"But I do want to direct your attention to the devastating analysis of Columbia's delivery performance for the current 1944-45 season, which appeared in HARRISON'S REPORTS on June 9, 1945. Harrison points out that Columbia has released only five of its promised fifteen top pictures, and he emphasizes that it will be impossible for Columbia to release all of the top pictures it promised for this year. Furthermore,—and this should not surprise you—Columbia is not releasing some of its top pictures, but is withholding them for next year. For more than twenty-five years, Peter Harrison has been the watch dog protecting the rights of the independent exhibitor and exposing the malpractices of the motion picture industry.

"You are urged to carefully read this issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, and if you do not have it handy, drop into the office where a copy is on file. Well informed exhibitors use HARRISON'S REPORTS as a valuable guide in the operation of their theatres. Are you a subscriber?"



Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

# HARRISON'S REPORTS

**Yearly Subscription Rates:**

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Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the ExhibitorsIts Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING****Vol. XXVII****SATURDAY, JULY 7, 1945****No. 27****DIMINISHING RETURNS**

An examination of the reports by experts in the financial sections of the daily newspapers leaves one convinced fully that the nation has passed the peak of its wartime prosperity, and that from now on business revenues will be on the decline. These reports are substantiated in the motion picture industry by the downward trend of box-office receipts throughout the country. In fact, only this week, the State Treasurer of Ohio released figures showing that motion picture theatres in the state of Ohio, during the first five months of 1945, as compared with the first five months of last year, suffered a decrease in attendance of sixteen per cent.

The main factor generally claimed to have caused this falling off of box-office receipts is, of course, the steady rise in unemployment pending the reconversion of war industries to peacetime production. Among other factors that are claimed to have had an effect on the box-office are the exodus of transient workers from towns whose populations had swelled abnormally; the reduced earnings of those still employed, causing them to become thrifty and to cut down on their theatre attendance; and the poor quality of many pictures, which is driving patrons away from the theatres.

While each of these factors has undoubtedly had its share in causing a decline in patronage, a still more powerful one, in the opinion of this writer, is yet to come. How soon and to what extent is unpredictable, but it deserves the careful study of the thoughtful exhibitor. The factor I speak of is a reaction to natural causes, such as we experienced after World War I, when the cost of living, like water, sought its own level.

During that war, particularly in the last years of it, the shortage of labor sent wages skyward, and the manufacturers and retailers, taking advantage of the public's bulging pocketbook, charged unheard-of prices for articles, not only of luxury, but also of necessity. As a result, the cost of living rose to an unprecedented high, putting labor in a position to demand still higher wages. Everybody's earning capacity was abnormal, and everybody spent money lavishly. People lived in a fool's paradise with no thought given to the future.

With the end of the war, and with the cutbacks in war contracts that followed, the economic state of the nation began a downward trend to normalcy. The army of unemployed increased constantly, and labor fought to maintain the high wages they had been enjoying. The manufacturers, however, faced with selling products to a people that had become thrift conscious, could not pay such high wages and, rather

than suffer a possible loss, shut down their plants until such a time as labor saw fit to accept a wage that made it possible for them to manufacture products at a cost in conformity with the public's ability to buy. While this process of readjustment went on, the country suffered a business slump, which in turn affected the motion picture business.

Today we find ourselves in the midst of an economic transition unprecedented in the history of the nation and of the motion picture business. I say unprecedented because, unlike the period that followed World War I, when the country laid down its arms and converted from a wartime economy to a peacetime economy, the present day finds the nation in a transition period that might be called one of half peace and half war.

Because our country has never undergone such a transition period, the way ahead is uncharted, and even the best business experts cannot predict just what the future holds, for the progress of our war with Japan is the decisive factor in any prediction; a lengthy war, with its requirement of vast supplies will hold the national economy at a level high above normal, while a sudden collapse of Japan, which is quite possible in view of the tremendous pressure now bearing down on her, will jolt the national economy seriously, though in all probability temporarily, pending total reconversion to civilian production.

I do not believe that the transition period through which we are now passing is going to result in a serious business slump, for, even though unemployment may be on the rise, most people of moderate means have saved sufficient money to tide them over until the wheels of civilian production begin to turn, provided, of course, that their layoffs are not unduly long. But I do believe that, like the period following the last war, there will take place economic disturbances, which, though they will not result in a depression, will certainly have a decided effect on the national income as compared with the prosperity we have been enjoying for the past few years. The man on the street, no longer assured of a pay envelope made fat by time-and-one-half pay for many hours of overtime work each week, will find that he can no longer afford to pay high prices for articles of luxury; and if the prices of necessities are too high he will confine himself to bare necessities. The retailer, to regain this thrift-conscious citizen as a customer, will make demands on the wholesaler for merchandise that can be sold at a price within the means of his customer, and the wholesaler will in turn bring pressure to bear against the manufacturer, who will then place the issue squarely in the lap of his employee—the man in the

(Continued on last page)

### **"Gangs of the Waterfront" with Robert Armstrong and Stephanie Bachelor**

(*Republic*, July 3; time, 56 min.)

Just a moderately entertaining melodrama of the gangster variety. The story is extremely far-fetched, but where patrons are not too exacting in their demands it should give fair satisfaction. One is held in considerable suspense throughout, owing to the danger to the hero, who, because of his resemblance to a notorious gang leader, impersonates the man and assumes leadership of his gang in an effort to help the police curb their activities. There is excitement in the closing scenes, where the gang leader returns to the waterfront to expose his impersonator only to be killed mistakenly by one of his own henchmen. The performances are fair, with Robert Armstrong playing a dual role. A romance has been worked into the plot:—

Injured in an automobile accident, Robert Armstrong, a gang leader, whose gang had been troubling the police, is held incommunicado in a hospital by William Forrest, the district attorney, who puts into effect a plan to gain evidence against the gang for the murder of Stephanie Bachelor's father, head of a nautical supply company. Forrest communicates with a taxidermist (also played by Armstrong), who bore an amazing resemblance to the gang leader, and induces him to impersonate Armstrong and to assume leadership of the gang. Familiarizing himself with Armstrong's habits and with the gang's activities, the taxidermist takes charge of the gang and succeeds in fooling the unsuspecting members. He holds a conference with other gang leaders under the pretense of organizing them, but actually gathers evidence against them. Meanwhile Stephanie, believing him to be the real gang leader, complains to the police that he was trying to "shake her down." Following a series of complications in which the taxidermist tries to protect Stephanie from the gangsters without arousing their suspicions, Martin Koslek, the gang leader's first lieutenant, learns of his identity. In the meantime, Armstrong, learning of the masquerade, escapes from the hospital and heads for the waterfront to confront his impersonator. The police rush to the scene to protect the taxidermist and, in the midst of a gun battle, Koslek shoots down the real gang leader in the belief that he was the taxidermist. The other gangsters are either shot or taken into custody. Stephanie and the taxidermist plan to wed.

Albert Beich wrote the screen play, and George Blair produced and directed it. The cast includes Marian Martin and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Arson Squad" with Frank Albertson and Robert Armstrong**

(*PRC*, no release date set; time, 64 min.)

A fairly entertaining program melodrama. The plot follows a familiar pattern, but the action is fast and at times exciting. As indicated by the title, the story deals with arsonists. The spectator is held in fairly tense suspense throughout, as a result of the fact that the hero, a fire insurance investigator posing as an insurance salesman, is in constant danger because of his efforts to uncover the doings of a professional gang of arsonists. A spectacular warehouse fire, two murders, and a mild romance, have been worked into the plot. The closing scenes, where the

hero and the police trap the arsonists in the act of setting a fire, are exciting:—

When a woolen warehouse burns down, and when Byron Foulger's partner is found murdered in the building, Captain Robert Armstrong, of the Arson Squad, and Frank Albertson, an insurance investigator posing as a salesman, suspect arson and set about to prove it. Albertson informs the head of the insurance company of his suspicions and induces him to withhold payment of the insurance, despite the objections of Chester Clute, the company's chief adjuster. Through Grace Gillen, Foulger's secretary, Albertson obtains invoices covering a woolen shipment supposedly burned in the fire, and learns that the wool had been sold by Jerry Jerome, head of a woolen firm. A visit to Jerome's office convinces Albertson that he was head of an arson ring that had been avoiding detection cleverly, and other evidence indicates to him that Jerome was in league with Foulger in the warehouse fire. Shortly after, Armstrong informs Albertson that a new warehouse had taken out a \$75,000 insurance policy on a woolen shipment from Jerome. Albertson, posing as a fire inspector, visits the warehouse, copies the bolt numbers on the woolens, and discovers that they correspond to the invoice numbers on the shipment supposedly burned in Foulger's warehouse. Aided by Armstrong's Arson Squad, Albertson allows Jerome's gang to set the stage for the fire, then captures them as they set it off. Jerome, to save his own neck, reveals that Clute, the insurance company's adjuster, had been the arson ring's mastermind.

Arthur St. Claire wrote the screen play, Arthur Alexander produced it, and Lew Landers directed it. Unobjectionable morally.

### **"White Pongo" with Richard Fraser and Maris Wrixon**

(*PRC*, no release date set; time, 72 min.)

Undiscriminating audiences may find enough excitement in this jungle melodrama to satisfy them, but others will probably find it tiresome on the whole, for not only is the story trite, implausible, and long-drawn out, but also the direction and acting is amateurish. The action centers around a search for a huge white gorilla, the hybrid product of a scientific experiment, and, for added interest, the plot includes a love triangle, the machinations of an unscrupulous guide, and an exciting jungle battle between two huge gorillas, the Hollywood variety, of course. One follows the proceedings restlessly, occasionally laughing where no laughter was intended. Liberal use has been made of jungle clips to pad out the thin plot. While the picture rates as no better than average program fare, it is the sort that lends itself to exploitation:—

Through a white man who had escaped from an African tribe, Lionel Royce, an anthropologist, and Gordon Richards, a British scientist, learn of a white gorilla that had been created by a missing scientist, using human spermatozoa. Richard, accompanied by Maris Wrixon, his daughter, and by Michael Dyne, his secretary, had organized a safari to explore the Congo, but he changes his mind and decides to search for the white gorilla. En route, bitterness develops in the safari because of Dyne's jealousy over Maris' interest in Richard Fraser, a rifleman. Meanwhile, unknown to the party, the white gorilla had been trailing them, intent upon capturing Maris, with whom



he was fascinated. Al Eben, the safari's guide, a murderous renegade, notices Dyne's jealousy over Maris and grasps the opportunity to enlist his aid in a plan to seize the parties supplies and guns so that they could embark on their own in search of a fabulous gold field. Dyne agrees when Eben permits him to take Maris along against her will. The two men overpower the others and, leaving them bound, take control of the safari and start on their search. En route, Dyne is murdered by Eben, who in turn is killed by the white gorilla, which captures Maris. Meanwhile Fraser frees himself and the others from their bounds and reveals himself to be an agent of the Rhodesian Secret Service, explaining that he had joined the safari to capture Eben. They set out in search of Maris, and trail her to the gorilla's cave, where they arrive in time to save her and to capture the beast for scientific study.

Raymond L. Schrock wrote the screen play, Sigmund Neufeld produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"You Came Along" with Elizabeth Scott and Robert Cummings**

(Paramount, Sept. 14; time, 103 min.)

This is a good entertainment, with plentiful comedy, and with emotional appeal in many of the situations; it should be received well by the rank and file, for it is rich in human interest, and there is a certain breeziness about it that keeps the interest alive. The story revolves around three aviators, all wounded heroes, who are assigned to a nation-wide bond-selling tour under the guidance of a pretty young lady, a Treasury representative. The heart-warming part of the picture is the friendship between the three men. Their affection, understanding, and concern for each other, despite their outward flippant attitude, is inspiring. Most of the action is confined to their gay exploits and to their good-natured vying for the attentions of Elizabeth Scott, their guide. Miss Scott, a newcomer, has an arresting personality, and her acting is skillful. Her romance with Robert Cummings, and her subsequent marriage to him, despite her knowledge that his days were numbered because of an incurable blood disease, furnish some of the story's gayest yet tenderest moments. Aside from the gayety, enough is said by the different characters to give one an insight of the influence of war on fighting men, and of what each one hopes to return to:—

Assigned to a nation-wide bond-selling tour, Robert Cummings, Don DeFore, and Charles Drake, spend every free moment away from their duties to go out on dates. Their gay idiosyncrasies keep Elizabeth on edge, but she copes with them good-naturedly. As the tour progresses, Elizabeth and Cummings fall in love, but she discovers that he was suffering from a blood disease, from which there was no recovery. Elizabeth finds herself faced with a desire to marry a man whose death was imminent, while Cummings, aware that his days were limited, felt that marriage would be unfair to her. Their love, however, proves so strong that they marry immediately. Their wedding is followed by two months of idyllic contentment and happiness, until one day Cummings is ordered to a hospital to live out his remaining days. Pretending that he had been ordered overseas, Cummings bids goodbye to his wife and pals. All, however, sensed that they would not see him again, and, within a few

weeks, the War Department advises Elizabeth of his death. She faces the future unafraid, satisfied that she and Cummings had shared a brief but beautiful period.

Robert Smith and Ayn Rand wrote the screen play, Hal Wallis produced it, and John Farrow directed it. The cast includes Julie Bishop, Kim Hunter, Helen Forrest, Franklin Pangborn and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Cheaters" with Joseph Schildkraut, Ona Munson and Eugene Pallette**

(Republic, no release date set; time, 87 min.)

A fairly good program entertainment. It is an appealing comedy-drama, with a heart-warming, sentimental quality, and with good comedy bits. The production values are good, and the direction and acting impressive, particularly the performance of Joseph Schildkraut, as a faded matinee idol, who retains his poise, despite his weakness for drink. The story, which deals with the eventual regeneration of a grasping, selfish family on the verge of financial ruin, is developed naturally, and some parts of it are inspiring. The manner in which they are made ashamed of their selfishness and greed, and in which they are transformed into sincere, human people, leaves one with a warm feeling:—

On the verge of financial ruin because of the extravagance of his wife (Billie Burke), his daughters (Ruth Terry and Ann Gillis), his son (David Holt), and his lazy brother-in-law (Raymond Walburn), Eugene Pallette awaits the momentary death of a rich uncle, whose fortune he hoped to inherit. While the family prepares for the Christmas holidays, Pallette, to help Ruth impress her boy-friend, Robert Livingston, a Boston socialite, permits her to invite a "charity case" to spend Christmas with the family. Schildkraut, who had become a drinking, philosophical cynic, is brought to the house. Shortly after his arrival, the uncle dies, leaving \$5,000,000 to Ona Munson, an unemployed actress, whom he had known as a child. The will stipulated that the money revert to Pallette if Ona could not be found within a reasonable time. With typical selfishness, Pallette and the family decide to invite the girl to their home and, through trickery, keep her ignorant of her good fortune until the time for her search expires. Informed by the family that she was a long-lost cousin, Ona, penniless, grasps the opportunity of spending a comfortable, well-fed holiday with them. Her honesty, sincerity, and warm-heartedness soon endear Ona to all who were trying to victimize her. On Christmas Eve, Schildkraut, who had fallen in love with Ona, and who was aware of the family's scheme to defraud her, impresses the family with their selfishness and greed by reciting Dicken's "Christmas Carol" and likening Pallette to "Scrooge." Ona, unaware of Schildkraut's purpose, confesses that she was not the family's cousin, and that she was enjoying their hospitality under false pretenses. Schildkraut's symbolic story, and Ona's genuine gesture, makes the family so remorseful that they confess to Ona their scheme. Flabbergasted but delighted, Ona promises them half the fortune, and convinces Schildkraut that, with her, his life will again be worth living.

Frances Hyland wrote the screen play, and Joseph Kane produced and directed it. The cast includes Robert Grieg, St. Luke's Choristers and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

street. Thus does the cost of living find its own level, but in the interim, business is bound to suffer.

In our business, the retailer is the exhibitor, the wholesaler is the distributor, and the manufacturer is the producer.

It would be well for every exhibitor to reconcile himself to the fact that, for some time to come, he will not experience the prosperity of the past few years, and he should adjust his plans accordingly.

Recent editorials in this paper have cautioned you as to the prices you should pay for the coming season's product lest you find yourself burdened with pictures, the revenue of which will not be commensurate with the crushing rentals paid. Those of you who will heed this warning will be better able to weather any possible storm, but those of you who are so drunk with prosperity that this counsel will not make upon you the slightest impression may find yourselves reaping the consequences of your folly.

HARRISON'S REPORTS is not a spreader of gloom. It is an exponent of caution, and its aim is to study conditions as they are and to present them to you, so that you may be guided accordingly in the operation of your theatres.

From time to time the trade papers give space to the optimistic talk of the producer-distributor representatives about what the future holds. Their optimism is understandable; they have film to sell. Don't let them lull you into a false sense of security by pointing out that last year's business was one of the best the industry has ever known and that the coming year will be even better. Present conditions indicate that that the future will not be so rosy, and the only way for you to cope with it is to take practical economic measures now.

Demand that your film rentals come down!

### CONSISTENT COLUMBIA

According to the daily trade papers, Columbia has announced that its annual sales drive, the "Montague Twentieth Anniversary Campaign," which was originally scheduled to run from March 16 to June 28, has been extended for an additional two months, and will now end on August 30.

The company's purpose in extending the drive is to include in the campaign several important features, among which are "A Thousand and One Nights" and "Over 21."

From the way this news item has been written up in the papers, one who was not acquainted with the facts might get the impression that Columbia prolonged the drive to include "A Thousand and One Nights" and "Over 21" as something extra.

Lest some of you gain that impression, let me remind you that these two productions were included in the original announcement of the drive, and that both were promised for delivery by June 28. Being consistent, however, Columbia failed to deliver as promised.

But the reason for this non-delivery is not too difficult to understand; these two pictures are the only important productions Columbia has on hand, and if both were delivered by June 28 the company would have found itself with only a few minor pictures for delivery in July and August, thus defeating its usual purpose of ending a season in a blaze of glory, in the hope that its customers would forget the injustices they suffered during the preceding months.

### A PLEA IN REVERSE

A recent issue of the *Hollywood Reporter* states that "Three thousand features, made during the past five years, are now ready for distribution in the countries of Europe from which they were barred either through Nazi action or by exigencies of war. The returns on the huge backlog will amount to millions of dollars of revenue over a period of years, and may be used as a 'cushion' against any possible drop in domestic grosses, or, should post war currency blockings take place in foreign lands, be utilized for production, distribution, and exhibition in those countries."

Most of you, I am sure, will remember when, in 1939, the producers, in order to overcome their anticipated loss of revenue from war-torn Europe, suggested that the American exhibitors pay higher film rentals, so that they (the producers) could continue the production of meritorious quality films. Their anxiety, however, proved to be premature, for their earnings during the past five years, even in foreign countries, have exceeded by far their fondest dreams.

Now they find themselves with approximately three thousand features from which they have already realized fabulous profits, and from which they expect to derive more millions of dollars in the foreign markets. By the same process of reasoning that they used when they pleaded with the exhibitors for help in 1939, will the producer-distributors now offer to reflect these millions of dollars of potential profits in reduced rentals to the American exhibitors?

The reopening of the foreign markets gives the distributors a chance to be not only fair, but also consistent.

### AN UNALLURING ALLURE

*Film Daily* reports that the Florida legislature, which for many years has made attempts to lure motion picture producers to its state, has authorized the appointment of a Motion Picture Industry Committee to "take such steps as are deemed advisable to attract the industry."

The resolution held that "Florida offers many natural advantages to the motion picture industry not available in other sections of the nation," and it listed among the advantages tropical scenery, climate, access to large centers of population, and proximity to the latin American countries of Central and South America and to the islands of the South Seas.

These advantages are indeed alluring, but what do the Florida legislators intend to do with their mosquitos and gnats if they should induce the producers to try production in Florida? And what about the summer heat?

The state of Florida should centre its attention on some other industry, and should leave motion picture production to Hollywood.

### ORDER YOUR MISSING COPIES

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## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXVII

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 7, 1945

No. 27

(Semi-Annual Index—First Half of 1945)

Titles of Pictures	Reviewed on Page	Hangover Square—20th Century-Fox (77 min.)	10
Affairs of Susan, The—Paramount (109 min.)	50	Having Wonderful Crime—RKO (70 min.)	26
Along Came Jones—RKO (90 min.)	95	Her Lucky Night—Universal (63 min.)	28
Back to Bataan—RKO (95 min.)	86	Here Come the Co-Eds—Universal (87 min.)	19
Bedside Manner—United Artists (79 min.)	95	High Powered—Paramount (60 min.)	30
Bell for Adano, A—20th Century-Fox (104 min.)	99	His Brother's Ghost—PRC (56 min.)	not reviewed
Bells of Rosarita—Republic (68 min.)	not reviewed	Hitchhike to Happiness—Republic (72 min.)	67
Betrayal from the East—RKO (82 min.)	27	Hollywood and Vine—PRC (58 min.)	43
Bewitched—MGM (65 min.)	99	Honeymoon Ahead—Universal (59 min.)	78
Beyond the Pecos—Universal (59 min.)	not reviewed	Horn Blows at Midnight, The—Warner Bros. (78 min.)	56
Big Bonanza, The—Republic (69 min.)	6	Hotel Berlin—Warner Bros. (98 min.)	34
Big Show-Off, The—Republic (70 min.)	10	House of Fear, The—Universal (68 min.)	46
Blonde from Brooklyn—Columbia (65 min.)	82	Identity Unknown—Republic (71 min.)	55
Blonde Ransom—Universal (68 min.)	86	I'll Remember April—Universal (63 min.)	58
Blood on the Sun—United Artists (94 min.)	67	I'll Tell the World—Universal (62 min.)	103
Body Snatcher, The—RKO (78 min.)	32	I Love a Mystery—Columbia (69 min.)	18
Boston Blackie Booked on Suspicion—Columbia (67 min.)	62	Incendiary Blonde—Paramount (113 min.)	94
Boston Blackie's Rendezvous—Columbia (64 min.)	103	In Old New Mexico—Monogram (62 min.)	not reviewed
Brewster's Millions—United Artists (79 min.)	42	It's A Pleasure—RKO (90 min.)	36
Brighton Strangler, The—RKO (67 min.)	70	It's in the Bag—United Artists (87 min.)	23
Bring on the Girls—Paramount (92 min.)	26	Jade Mask, The—Monogram (66 min.)	14
Bullfighters, The—20th Century-Fox (61 min.)	60	Jungle Captive—Universal (63 min.)	96
Captain Eddie—20th Century-Fox (107 min.)	98	Junior Miss—20th Century-Fox (94 min.)	94
Castle of Crimes—PRC (60 min.)	2	Keep Your Powder Dry—MGM (93 min.)	27
Chicago Kid, The—Republic (68 min.)	22	Kid Sister, The—PRC (55 min.)	23
China Sky—RKO (78 min.)	62	Lady Confesses, The—PRC (65 min.)	56
China's Little Devils—Monogram (74 min.)	55	Last Gangster, The—20th Century-Fox (see "Roger Touhy, Gangster") 1944	86
Circumstantial Evidence—20th Century-Fox (68 min.)	27	Leave it to Blondie—Columbia (73 min.)	22
Cisco Kid Returns, The—Monogram (64 min.)	not reviewed	Let's Go Steady—Columbia (60 min.)	6
Clock, The—MGM (90 min.)	46	Lone Texas Ranger—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
Colonel Blimp—United Artists (148 min.)	47	Man Called Sullivan, A—United Artists (see, "The Great John, L")	91
Conflict—Warner Bros. (86 min.)	95	Man from Oklahoma—Republic (68 min.)	not reviewed
Corn is Green, The—Warner Bros. (114 min.)	51	Man Who Walked Alone, The—PRC (73 min.)	47
Corpus Christi Bandits—Republic (55 min.)	not reviewed	Marked for Murder—PRC (58 min.)	not reviewed
Counter-Attack—Columbia (90 min.)	56	Marked Man, The—Columbia (see "Mark of the Whistler") 1944	178
Crime Doctor's Courage, The—Columbia (70 min.)	36	Medal for Benny, A—Paramount (77 min.)	59
Crime, Inc.—PRC (75 min.)	28	Midnight Manhunt—Paramount (See "One Exciting Night")	96
Delightfully Dangerous—United Artists (93 min.)	34	Missing Corpse, The—PRC (62 min.)	71
Diamond Horseshoe—20th Century-Fox (104 min.)	59	Molly and Me—20th Century-Fox (76 min.)	38
Dillinger, John—Monogram (71 min.)	42	Mr. Emmanuel—United Artists (92 min.)	7
Divorce—Monogram (72 min.)	91	Muggs Rides Again—Monogram (64 min.)	66
Docks of New York—Monogram (62 min.)	36	Murder, He Says—Paramount (91 min.)	60
Don Juan Quilligan—20th Century-Fox (75 min.)	91	Naughty Nineties, The—Universal (76 min.)	99
Eadie Was a Lady—Columbia (67 min.)	11	Navajo Trail—Monogram (55 min.)	not reviewed
Earl Carroll Vanities—Republic (91 min.)	39	Nob Hill—20th Century-Fox (95 min.)	87
Enchanted Cottage, The—RKO (92 min.)	27	Objective Burma—Warner Bros. (142 min.)	14
Enemy of the Law—PRC (56 min.)	not reviewed	One Exciting Night—Paramount (63 min.)	96
Escape in the Desert—Warner Bros. (79 min.)	66	Oregon Trail—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
Escape in the Fog—Columbia (63 min.)	42	Out of this World—Paramount (96 min.)	90
Eve Knew Her Apples—Columbia (64 min.)	51	Pan-Americana—RKO (85 min.)	30
Fashion Model—Monogram (61 min.)	38	Pass to Romance—Universal (see "Hi' Beautiful") 1944	186
Fighting Guardsman, The—Columbia (84 min.)	70	Patrick the Great—Universal (88 min.)	64
Flame of the Barbary Coast—Republic (91 min.)	63	Penthouse Rhythm—Universal (60 min.)	78
Fog Island—PRC (70 min.)	43	Phantom of 42nd Street—PRC (58 min.)	54
Forever Yours—Monogram (see "They Shall Have Faith")	2	Phantom Speaks, The—Republic (68 min.)	64
Frisco Sal—Universal (94 min.)	26	Picture of Dorian Gray, The—MGM (110 min.)	30
Frozen Ghost, The—Universal (61 min.)	83	Pillow to Post—Warner Bros. (92 min.)	79
Gangsters' Den—PRC (55 min.)	not reviewed	Power of the Whistler, The—Columbia (67 min.)	50
G.I. Honeymoon—Monogram (70 min.)	50	Renegades of the Rio Grande—Universal (57 min.)	not reviewed
God is My Co-Pilot—Warner Bros. (90 min.)	31	Return of the Durango Kid—Columbia (58 min.)	not reviewed
Great Flamarion, The—Republic (78 min.)	10		
Great John L, The—United Artists (96 min.)	91		
Great Stage Coach Robbery, The—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed		
Grissley's Millions—Republic (72 min.)	6		
Gun Smoke—Monogram (59 min.)	not reviewed		
Guy, a Gal and a Pal, A—Columbia (61 min.)	74		

Rhapsody in Blue—Warner Bros. (139 min.).....	102
Rockin' in the Rockies—Columbia (67 min.)..	not reviewed
Rogues Gallery—PRC (58 min.).....	3
Rough Ridin' Justice—Columbia (58 m.)....	not reviewed
Roughly Speaking—Warner Bros. (128 min.).....	18
Rough, Tough and Ready—Columbia (66½ min.)....	38
Royal Scandal, A—20th Century-Fox (94 min.).....	46
Sage Brush Heroes—Columbia (54 m.).....	not reviewed
Salome, Where She Danced—Universal (90 min.)....	59
Salty O'Rourke—Paramount (97 min.) .....	31
Sante Fe Saddle Mates—Republic (56 min.)..	not reviewed
Scared Stiff—Paramount (63 min.).....	60
Scarlet Clue, The—Monogram (64 min.).....	55
See My Lawyer—Universal (67 min.).....	30
Sergeant Mike—Columbia (60 min.).....	22
Shadows of Death—PRC (56 min.).....	not reviewed
She Get's Her Man—Universal (74 min.).....	7
Sheriff of Cimarron—Republic (55 m.).....	not reviewed
She's a Sweetheart—Columbia (69 min.) .....	35
Silver Fleet, The—PRC (77 min.).....	54
Sing Me a Song of Texas—Columbia (66 m.)..	not reviewed
Song for Miss Julie, A—Republic (70 min.).....	32
Son of Lassie—MGM (100 min.).....	63
Song of the Sarong—Universal (63 min.).....	58
Song to Remember, A—Columbia (113 min.).....	11
Southerner, The—United Artists (91 min.).....	71
Spell of Amy Nugent, The—PRC (60 min.).....	34
Springtime in Texas—Monogram (57 min.)..	not reviewed
Steppin' in Society—Republic (72 min.).....	90
Story of G.I. Joe—United Artists (109 min.).....	98
Strange Illusion—PRC (86 min.).....	31
Stranger from Sante Fe—Monogram (53 m.)..	not reviewed
Sudan—Universal (76 min.) .....	39
Swing Out, Sister—Universal (60 min.).....	70
Ten Cents a Dance—Columbia (60 min.).....	74
That's the Spirit—Universal (92 min.).....	78
There Goes Kelly—Monogram (61 min.).....	35
They Are Guilty—Monogram (see "Are These Our Parents") 1944 .....	99
They Shall Have Faith—Monogram (83 min.).....	2
This Man's Navy—MGM (100 min.).....	3
Thoroughbreds—Republic (55 min.).....	14
Those Endearing Young Charms—RKO (82 min.)....	62
Thousand and One Nights, A—Columbia (92 min.)...	94
Three in the Saddle—PRC (60 min.).....	not reviewed
Thrill of a Romance—MGM (102 min.).....	82
Thunderhead—Son of Flicka—20th Century-Fox (78 min.) .....	19
Tonight and Every Night—Columbia (92 min.).....	15
Topeka Terror, The—Republic (55 min.)....	not reviewed
Trail of Kit Carson—Republic (56 min.)....	not reviewed
Tree Grows in Brooklyn, A—20th Century-Fox (128 min.) .....	15
Trouble Chasers—Monogram (63 min.).....	79
Twice Blessed—MGM (76 min.).....	87
Two O'Clock Courage—RKO (66 min.).....	54
Under the Clock—MGM (see "The Clock").....	46
Under Western Skies—Universal (57 min.).....	2
Unseen, The—Paramount (79 min.) .....	32
Utah—Republic (78 m.) .....	not reviewed
Valley of Decision, The—MGM (118 min.).....	58
Vampire's Ghost, The—Republic (59 min.).....	64
Way Ahead, The—20th Century-Fox (106 min.)....	86
West of the Pecos—RKO (66 min.).....	92
What a Blonde—RKO (71 min.).....	18
Where Do We Go from Here?—20th Century-Fox (77 min.) .....	82
Why Girls Leave Home—PRC (68 min.).....	102
Within these Walls—20th Century-Fox (71 min.)....	90
Without Love—MGM (111 min.) .....	47
Woman in Green, The—Universal (68 min.).....	98
Wonder Man—RKO (96 min.).....	66
Youth on Trial—Columbia (60 min.).....	35
Zombies on Broadway—RKO (67 min.).....	63

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

### Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

6037 Escape in the Fog—Foch-Wright.....	Apr. 5
6026 Eve Knew Her Apples—Miller-Wright.....	Apr. 12
6222 Rockin' in the Rockies—Stooges-Hughes (67 m.) .....	Apr. 17
6023 Power of the Whistler—Dix-Carter.....	Apr. 19

6206 Return of the Rurango Kid—Starrett (58 m.)	Apr. 19
6006 Counter-Attack—Muni-Chapman .....	Apr. 26
6031 Boston Blackie Booked on Suspicion—Morris	May 10
6207 Both Barrels Blazing—Charles Starrett (57 m.) .....	May 17
6010 The Fighting Guardsman—Parker-Louise....	May 24
6029 Ten Cents a Dance—Frazee-Lloyd.....	June 7
6223 Rhythm Round-Up—Western musical.....	June 7
6036 Blonde from Brooklyn—Stanton-Merrick....	June 21
6030 Boston Blackie's Rendezvous—Morris .....	July 5
6005 A Thousand and One Nights—Wilde-Keyes	July 12
You Can't Do Without Love—Lynn-Stewart....	July 28
The Gay Senorita—Falkenburg-Cochran....	Aug. 9
Rustlers of the Badlands—Starrett.....	Aug. 16
Over 21—Dunne-Knox-Coburn .....	Aug. 23
Special	
A Song to Remember—Muni-Oberon .....	Mar. 1

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

#### Block 11

522 Without Love—Hepburn-Tracy .....	May
523 Gentle Annie—Craig-Reed .....	May
524 The Clock—Garland-Walker .....	May
525 The Picture of Dorian Gray— Sanders-Hatfield .....	June
526 Son of Lassie—Lawford-Crisp .....	June
Block 12	
528 Thrill of a Romance—Johnson-Williams.....	July
529 Twice Blessed—Lee and Lynn Wilde.....	July
530 Bewitched—Thaxter-Gwenn .....	July

#### Specials

500 Dragon Seed—Hepburn-Huston .....	Aug. '44
511 Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo—Tracy-Johnson...	January
512 Meet Me in St. Louis—Garland-O'Brien....	January
521 National Velvet—Rooney-Taylor .....	April
527 Valley of Decision—Garson-Peck .....	June

### Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

406 G. I. Honeymoon—Storm-Cookson .....	Apr. 6
418 The Scarlet Clue—Sidney Toler .....	May 5
430 In Old New Mexico—Renaldo (62 min.)....	May 15
462 Springtime in Texas—Wakely (57 min.)....	June 2
424 Trouble Chasers—Howard-Gilbert .....	June 2
451 Flame of the West—Brown-Woodbury (70m.)	June 9
411 Muggs Rides Again—East Side Kids.....	June 16
405 China's Little Devils—Carey-Kelly (re.)....	July 14
Divorce—Francis Cabot .....	Not set
412 Come Out Fighting—East Side Kids.....	Not set
456 Stranger from Sante Fe—J. M. Brown (53 m.)	July 21
Saddle Serenade—Wakely .....	July 28

### Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

#### Block 5

4421 Affairs of Susan—Fontaine-Brent.....	May 25
4422 Murder, He Says—MacMurray-Walker ....	June 8
4423 Scared Stiff—Haley-Savage .....	June 22
4424 A Medal for Benny—Lamour-DeCordova...	June 29

#### Block 6

4426 Out of this World—Bracken-Lynn.....	July 13
4427 Midnight Manhunt—Gargan-Savage (formerly "One Exciting Night") .....	July 27
4428 You Came Along—Scott-Cummings .....	Sept. 14

#### Special

4431 Incendiary Blonde—Hutton-De Cordova...	Aug. 31
Reissues	
4432 Sign of the Cross—Colbert-March..	No nat'l rel. date
4433 Northwest Mounted Police—Cooper-Carroll	Aug. 26
4434 This Gun for Hire—Ladd-Lake.....	Aug. 26
(End of 1944-45 Season)	

### PRC Pictures, Inc. Features

(625 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

502 Crime, Inc.—Tilton-Neal .....	Apr. 15
558 Shadows of Death—Buster Crabbe (56 m.)..	Apr. 19
515 Hollywood & Vine—Ellison-McKay.....	Apr. 25
521 Phantom of 42nd St.—O'Brien-Aldridge....	May 2
561 Enemy of the Law—Texas Rangers (56 m.)..	May 7
522 The Lady Confesses—Hughes-Beaumont ....	May 16
524 The Missing Corpse—Bromberg-Jenks .....	June 1
559 Gangsters' Den—Buster Crabbe (55 m.)....	June 14
The Silver Fleet—English cast .....	June 15



- 562 Three in the Saddle—Texas Rangers (60 m.)...June 29  
 Stagcoach Outlaws—Crabbe .....Aug. 17  
 Arson Squad—Albertson-Armstrong .....Sept. 11  
 Dangerous Intruder—Arnt-Borg .....Sept. 21

### Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

- 414 Identity Unknown—Arlen-Walker .....Apr. 2  
 413 Earl Carroll Vanities—O'Keefe-Moore.....Apr. 5  
 465 Corpus Christi Bandits—Lane-Watts (55 m.)...Apr. 20  
 433 The Phantom Speaks—Arlen-Ridges .....May 10  
 3318 Lone Texas Ranger—Elliot-Blake (56 m.)...May 20  
 434 The Vampire's Ghost—Abbott-Stewart .....May 21  
 416 Three's a Crowd—Blake-Gordon .....May 23  
 415 Flame of the Barbary Coast—Wayne-Dvorak...May 28  
 455 Sante Fe Saddle Mates—Carson-Stirling  
 (56 m.) .....June 2  
 420 A Sporting Chance—Randolph-O'Malley.....June 4  
 442 Bells of Rosarita—Roy Rogers (68 m.).....June 19  
 417 The Chicago Kid—Barry-Roberts .....June 29  
 422 Gangs of the Waterfront—Armstrong-  
 Bachelor .....July 3  
 423 Road to Alcatraz—Lowery-Storey .....July 10  
 466 Trail of Kit Carson—Lane-London (56 min.)...July 11  
 456 Oregon Trail—Carson-Stewart (56 min.)....July 14  
 419 Hitchhike to Happiness—Pearce-Evans .....July 16  
 424 Jealousy—Loder-Randolph .....July 23  
 418 Steppin' in Society—Horton-George.....July 29  
 443 Man from Oklahoma—Roy Rogers (68 min.)...Aug. 1

### RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

#### Block 4

- 516 Zombies on Broadway—Brown-Carney.....  
 517 The Body Snatcher—Karloff-Daniel.....  
 518 Tarzan and the Amazons—Weissmuller.....  
 519 China Sky—Scott-Warrick .....  
 520 Those Endearing Young Charms—Young-Day.....

#### Block 5

- 521 Two O'Clock Courage—Conway-Rutherford.....  
 522 The Brighton Strangler—Loder-Duprez .....  
 523 Back to Bataan—Wayne-Quinn .....  
 524 West of the Pecos—Mitchum-Hale .....  
 (Note: "George White's Scandals," originally listed in  
 Block 5, has been withdrawn.)

#### Specials

- 551 The Princess and the Pirate—Bob Hope.....  
 581 Casanova Brown—Cooper-Wright .....  
 582 Woman in the Window—Bennett-Robinson.....  
 583 Belle of the Yukon—Scott-Lee.....  
 584 It's a Pleasure—Henie-O'Shea.....  
 591 The Three Caballeros—Disney.....  
 552 Wonder Man—Kaye-Mayo.....

### 1945-46 Season

#### Specials

- 681 Along Came Jones—Cooper-Young.....

### Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

- 520 The Song of Bernadette—Jennifer Jones.....April  
 521 A Royal Scandal—Bankhead-Eythe.....April  
 522 Molly and Me—Woolley-Fields .....April  
 524 Diamond Horseshoe—Grable-Haymes .....May  
 525 The Bullfighters—Laurel & Hardy .....May  
 526 Where Do We Go from Here—  
 MacMurray-Leslie .....June  
 527 Don Juan Quilligan—Bendix-Blondell.....June  
 523 Call of the Wild—Gable-Young (reissue).....June  
 528 Within these Walls—Mitchell-Anderson .....July  
 529 Nob Hill—Raft-Blaine .....July  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- 601 A Bell for Adano—Hodiak-Tierney.....Aug.  
 602 Wilson-Knox-Fitzgerald (general release).....Aug.  
 603 Junior Miss—Garner-Joslyn.....Aug.

### United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- Brewster's Millions—O'Keefe-Walker .....Apr. 7  
 It's in the Bag—Fred Allen .....Apr. 21  
 Colonel Blimp—English cast .....May 4  
 The Great John L.—McLure-Darnell (re.).....May 29  
 Story of G.I. Joe—McCreith-Mitchum.....July 13  
 Guest Wife—Colbert-Ameche .....July 27

- The Southerner—Scott-Field (formerly "Hold  
 Autumn in Your Hand") (re.).....Aug. 10  
 Captain Kidd—Laughton-Scott .....Aug. 24  
 The Outlaw—Russell-Huston .....Aug. 24  
 Paris-Underground—Bennett-Fields .....Sept. 14  
 Spellbound—Bergman-Peck .....Sept. 28

### Universal Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

- 9027 I'll Remember April—Jean-Grant .....Apr. 13  
 9040 Song of the Sarong—Gargan-Kelly .....Apr. 20  
 9073 Salome—Where She Danced—DeCarlo-  
 Bruce .....Apr. 27  
 9083 Beyond the Pecos—Rod Cameron (59 m.)...Apr. 27  
 9011 Patrick the Great—O'Connor-Ryan .....May 4  
 9028 Honeymoon Ahead—Jones-McDonald.....May 11  
 9033 Swing out Sister—Cameron-Treacher.....May 18  
 9016 See My Lawyer—Olsen & Johnson.....May 25  
 That's the Spirit—Oakie-Ryan (re.).....June 1  
 9084 Renegades of the Rio Grande—Rod Cameron  
 (57 min.) .....June 1  
 9041 I'll Tell the World—Tracy-Preisser.....June 8  
 9042 Blonde Ransom—Grey-Cook (re.) .....June 15  
 9043 Penthouse Rhythm—Collier-Grant .....June 22  
 9032 The Frozen Ghost—Chaney-Ankers .....June 29  
 9038 Jungle Captive—Kruger-Ward .....June 29  
 9003 The Naughty Nineties—Abbott & Costello...July 6  
 Imitation of Life—Colbert (re.).....June 15  
 East Side of Heaven—Crosby (re.) .....June 15  
 On Stage Everybody—Oakie-Ryan .....July 13  
 9044 The Beautiful Cheat—Granville-Beery, Jr....July 20  
 The Woman in Green—Rathbone-Bruce ....July 27  
 Uncle Harry—Sanders-Raines .....Aug. 3  
 9045 Easy to Look At—Jean-Grant .....Aug. 10  
 Lady on a Train—Deanna Durbin.....Aug. 17

### Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

- 414 God is My Co-Pilot—Morgan-Massey.....Apr. 7  
 415 The Horn Blows at Midnight—Jack Benny...Apr. 28  
 416 Escape in the Desert—Dorn-Dantine .....May 19  
 417 Pillow to Post—Lupino-Prince .....June 9  
 418 Conflict—Bogart-Smith .....June 30  
 419 The Corn is Green—Davis-Dall .....July 21  
 420 Christmas in Connecticut—Stanwyck-Morgan...Aug. 11

## SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

### Columbia—One Reel

- 6752 The Egg Yegg—Fox & Crow (7½ m.).....May 4  
 6663 Victory Reel (V-E Day) .....May 8  
 6955 Lowe, Hite & Stanley—Film Vodvil (11 m.)...May 11  
 6859 Screen Snapshots No. 9 (9½ m.).....May 17  
 6901 A Harbor Goes to France—Panoramic  
 (10 m.) .....May 18  
 6659 Community Songs No. 9 (10 m.) .....May 25  
 6502 Rippling Romance—Col. Rhap. (8 m.) .....June 21  
 6660 Community Songs No. 10 .....June 29  
 6808 Hi Ho Rodeo—Sports (re.) .....July 22  
 6704 Booby Socks—Phantasy .....July 12  
 6503 Fiesta Time—Col. Rhapsody (7½ m.).....July 12  
 6753 Kukunuts—Fox & Crow (6½ m.).....July 26  
 6661 Community Songs No. 11 .....July 26  
 6860 Screen Snapshots No. 10 (10 m.) .....July 27  
 6809 Chips and Putts—Sports .....Aug. 10

### Columbia—Two Reels

- 6160 The Monster & the Ape (15 episodes) .....Apr. 20  
 6433 Pistol Packin' Nitwits—Brendel (17 m.) ....May 4  
 6411 Wifc Decoy—Hugh Herbert (17 m.) .....June 1  
 6423 The Jury Goes Round 'N Round—Vera Vague  
 (18 m.) .....June 15  
 6405 Idiots Deluxe—Stooges (17½ m.) .....July 20

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

#### 1943-44

- K-576 The Seasaw and the Shoes—Pass. Par.  
 (10 m.) .....May 5  
 (End of 1943-44 Season)

#### 1944-45

- T-611 Shrines of Yucatan—Traveltalk (9 m.)....Feb. 24  
 T-612 See El Salvador—Traveltalk (10 m.).....Mar. 31  
 W-631 The Mouse Comes to Dinner—Cartoon  
 (7 m.) .....May 5  
 W-632 Mouse in Manhattan—Cartoon (8 m.)....July 7

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

1943-44

A-502 Fall Guy—Special (18½ m.)	Apr. 14
A-503 The Last Installment—Special (18 m.)	May 5
A-504 Phantoms, Inc.—Special (17 m.)	June 9
(End of 1943-44 Season)	

## Paramount—One Reel

J4-4 Popular Science No. 4 (10 m.)	Apr. 6
D4-4 Beau Tics—Little Lulu (7 m.)	Apr. 20
E4-4 Shape Ahoy—Popeye (6 m.)	Apr. 27
R4-7 White Rhapsody—Spotlight (9 m.)	May 4
P4-5 A Lamb in a Jamb—Noveltoon (6 m.)	May 4
L4-4 Unusual Occupations No. 4 (10 m.)	May 11
Y4-4 Talk of the Town—Speak. of Animals (9 m.)	May 18
U4-5 Jasper's Minstrels—Puppetoon (9 m.)	May 25
D4-5 Daffydilly Daddy—Little Lulu (7 m.)	May 25
J4-5 Popular Science No. 5 (10 m.)	June 1
E4-5 For Better or Nurse—Popeye (6 m.)	June 8
R4-8 Fan Fare—Spotlight (9 m.)	June 8
D4-6 Snap Happy—Little Lulu (7 m.)	June 22
P4-6 A Self Made Mongrel—Noveltoon	June 29
U4-6 Hatful of Dreams—Puppetoon (9 m.)	July 6
L4-5 Unusual Occupations No. 5 (10 m.)	July 13
Y4-5 A Musical Way—Speaking of Animals (8m.)	July 20
R4-9 Canine-Feline Capers—Spotlight (9 m.)	July 27
U4-7 Jasper's Booby Traps—Puppetoon (8 m.)	Aug. 3
J4-6 Popular Science No. 6 (10 m.)	Aug. 10

## Paramount—Two Reels

FF4-4 Isle of Tabu—Musical Parade (17 m.)	Apr. 13
FF4-5 Boogie Woogie—Musical Parade (17 m.)	June 15
FF4-6 You Hit the Spot—Musical Parade (17 m.)	Aug. 17

## Republic—Two Reels

482 Manhunt of Mystery Island—Bailey-Stirling (15 episodes)	Mar. 17
483 Federal Operator 99 (12 episodes) Lamont-Talbot	July 7

## RKO—One Reel

54108 Dog Watch—Disney (7 m.)	Mar. 16
54206 Flicker Flashbacks No. 6 (8 m.)	Apr. 13
54309 Timber Doodles—Sportscope (8 m.)	Apr. 20
54110 African Diary—Disney (7 m.)	Apr. 20
54111 Donald's Crime—Disney (7 m.)	May 11
54310 West Point Winners—Sportscope ( m.)	May 18

## RKO—Two Reels

53106 Guam-Salvaged Island—This is America (17 min.)	Apr. 13
53107 Dress Parade—This Is America (16 m.)	May 4
53704 Let's Go Stepping—Leon Errol (17 m.)	May 4
53108 Battle of Supply—This is America (18 m.)	June 1

## Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

5259 Isle of Romance—Adventure (8 m.)	May 4
5516 Mother Goose Nightmare—Terrytoon (7 m.)	May 11
5517 Smoky Joe—Terrytoon (7 m.)	May 25
5354 Down the Fairway—Sports (8 m.)	June 1
5518 The Silver Streak—Terrytoon (7 min.)	June 8
5902 Do You Remember?—Lew Lahr (8 m.) (formerly "Good Old Days")	June 22
5519 Aesops Fable—The Mosquito—Terrytoon (7 m.)	June 29
5201 What it Takes to Make a Star—Adventure (formerly "Modeling for Money") (8 m.)	July 6
5520 Mighty Mouse & the Wolf—Terry. (7 m.)	July 20
5261 The Empire State—Adventure (8 m.)	July 27

## Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

Vol. 11 No. 9—The Returning Veteran—March of Time (18 min.)	Apr. 20
Vol. 11 No. 10—Spotlight on Congress—March of Time (16 m.)	May 18
Vol. 11 No. 11—Teen Age Girls—March of Time (17 m.)	June 15

## Universal—One Reel

9355 Your National Gallery—Var. Views (9 m.)	Apr. 23
9238 Woody Dines Out—Cartune (7 m.)	May 14
9375 Author in Babyland—Per. Odd. (9 m.)	May 14
9376 Broadway Farmer—Per. Odd. (9 m.)	May 28
9356 Wingmen of Tomorrow—Var. Views (9 m.)	June 4
9238 Crow Crazy—Cartune (7 m.)	July 9

## Universal—Two Reels

9881 The Master Key—Stone Wiley (13 episodes)	Apr. 24
9127 Rockabye Rhythm—Musical (15 m.)	June 20
9128 Artistry in Rhythm—Musical (15 m.)	July 18
Secret Agent X-9—13 episodes	July 24
9129 Waikiki Melody—Musical (15 m.)	Aug. 22

## Vitaphone—One Reel

1723 Hare Trigger—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)	May 5
1608 Circus Band—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)	May 5
1507 Water Babies—Sports (10 m.)	May 19
1705 Ain't that Ducky—Looney Tune (7 m.)	May 19
1405 Overseas Roundup No. 2—Varieties (10 m.)	May 26
1706 Gruesome Twosome—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.)	June 9
1508 Mexican Sea Sports—Sports (10 m.) (re.)	June 9
1509 Bahama Sea Sports—Sports (10 m.) (re.)	June 23
1609 Bands Across the Sea—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)	June 23
1510 Flivver Flying—Sports (10 m.)	June 30
1707 Tale of Two Mice—Looney Tune (7 m.)	June 30
1406 Overseas Roundup No. 3—Varieties (10 m.)	July 14
1610 Yankee Doodle Daughters—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)	July 21
1311 Speakin' of the Weather—Hit. Par. (17 m.)	July 21
1708 Wagon Wheels—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)	July 28

## Vitaphone—Two Reels

1111 Plantation Models—Featurette (20 m.)	May 12
1104 Coney Island Honeymoon—Special (20 m.)	June 9
1112 Learn and Live—Featurette (20 m.)	July 7

## NEWSWEEKLY

## NEW YORK

## RELEASE DATES

### Pathe News

55191 Sat. (O)	July 7
55292 Wed. (E)	July 11
55193 Sat. (O)	July 14
55294 Wed. (E)	July 18
55195 Sat. (O)	July 21
55296 Wed. (E)	July 25
55197 Sat. (O)	July 28
55298 Wed. (E)	Aug. 1
55199 Sat. (O)	Aug. 4
552100 Wed. (E)	Aug. 8
551101 Sat. (O)	Aug. 11
552102 Wed. (E)	Aug. 15
551103 Sat. (O)	Aug. 18

### Universal

412 Thurs. (E)	July 5
413 Tues. (O)	July 10
414 Thurs. (E)	July 12
415 Tues. (O)	July 17
416 Thurs. (E)	July 19
417 Tues. (O)	July 24
418 Thurs. (E)	July 26
419 Tues. (O)	July 31
420 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 2
421 Tues. (O)	Aug. 7
422 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 9
423 Tues. (O)	Aug. 14
424 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 16

### Metrotone News

286 Thurs. (E)	July 5
287 Tues. (O)	July 10
288 Thurs. (E)	July 12
289 Tues. (O)	July 17
290 Thurs. (E)	July 19
291 Tues. (O)	July 24
292 Thurs. (E)	July 26
293 Tues. (O)	July 31
294 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 2
295 Tues. (O)	Aug. 7
296 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 9
297 Tues. (O)	Aug. 14
298 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 16

### Paramount News

88 Thurs. (E)	July 5
89 Sunday (O)	July 8
90 Thurs. (E)	July 12
91 Sunday (O)	July 15
92 Thurs. (E)	July 19
93 Sunday (O)	July 22
94 Thurs. (E)	July 26
95 Sunday (O)	July 29
96 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 2
97 Sunday (O)	Aug. 5
98 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 9
99 Sunday (O)	Aug. 12
100 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 16

### Fox Movietone

88 Thurs. (E)	July 5
89 Tues. (O)	July 10
90 Thurs. (E)	July 12
91 Tues. (O)	July 17
92 Thurs. (E)	July 19
93 Tues. (O)	July 24
94 Thurs. (E)	July 26
95 Tues. (O)	July 31
96 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 2
97 Tues. (O)	Aug. 7
98 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 9
99 Tues. (O)	Aug. 14
100 Thurs. (E)	Aug. 16

### All American News

141 Friday	July 6
142 Friday	July 13
143 Friday	July 20
144 Friday	July 27
145 Friday	Aug. 3
146 Friday	Aug. 10
147 Friday	Aug. 17



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1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, JULY 14, 1945

No. 28

### EXPEDITING THE NEW YORK ANTI-TRUST SUIT

The first meeting of the three judges appointed recently to hear the Government's anti-trust suit against the five major distributors took place last Tuesday, in the New York Federal District Court, where they heard a motion by the distributor-defendants to compel the Government to answer more fully interrogatories they had previously submitted.

The Department of Justice maintained that the answers it had already given were sufficient, in view of the fact that the Government intended to present at the trial only a *prima facie* documentary case.

The Court agreed with the Department, and decided to hold the motion in abeyance, giving the defendants the right to ask for another hearing, on five days notice, if the Department should change its present plan of trial procedure.

During the argument on the motion, Robert L. Wright, special assistant to the U. S. Attorney General, revealed the Government's intention to present, through documentary evidence, a *prima facie* case to prove that the five consenting distributors have a monopoly on distribution and exhibition in that, through cross-licensing, availability of product, and restrictions on minimum admissions, they control first-run theatres in 92 cities with a population of 100,000 and over, and that they dominate exhibition in 432 situations in the country.

Wright reiterated the Government's contention that the only remedy was a complete separation of the defendants' theatre operating business from their production and distribution activities, as well as an injunction against certain of their trade practices.

According to a report by Milton Livingston, staff correspondent of *Motion Picture Daily*, "the whole tone of the hearing before the three-judge statutory court, composed of Judge Augustus N. Hand, who presided, and Judges Henry W. Goddard and John Bright, was of stern admonition to 'get things going' in the action, which has been pending for seven years, since July 20, 1938, with the Department of Justice having first filed its complaint on that date."

"Judge Hand warned," continued the report, "that there must be a greater spirit of cooperation between the two parties, or else the Court would take 'appropriate action.' He indicated that he might even order examinations before trial, and declared that the three judges 'do not intend to spend the rest of their lives hearing the case.'"

Most of you will recall that, last month, when the U. S. Attorney General filed a certificate with the Court, under the Expediting Act, certifying that the

case was of general public importance and making mandatory its hearing by a three-judge court, the distributors' attorneys did not relish the move. As reported in the June 23 issue of this paper, some of these attorneys resented the appointment of three judges as a departure from accepted procedure, and they saw little likelihood of a speedier trial as a result of the Government's move. As a matter of fact, they took pains to point out just why a three-judge court might delay and slow up the trial.

These attorneys apparently based their assumption on the hope that the newly-appointed judges would continue to tolerate the legalistic antics by which the case had been prolonged since it was filed in 1938. But it is evident from the report in *Motion Picture Daily* that Judge Hand, the presiding judge, will not put up with any more delaying tactics.

As said before in these columns, a case certified to be heard by a three-judge court must, under the statute, be "in every way expedited." And it certainly appears as if Judge Hand is determined to streamline the proceedings in a manner that will make them most expeditious.

Regardless of the ultimate outcome of the case, one thing is certain, that the sooner the case is speeded to a conclusion, the sooner will the entire industry benefit.

### AN EXCELLENT SUGGESTION

Under the heading, "Why Not Try Home Talent?" Abram F. Myers, general counsel of Allied States Association, has issued the following bulletin, dated July 5:

"Now that the industry faces reorganization to conform to the Sherman Act, there is a mad scramble among the producers to secure 'names' to front for them in the trying days ahead. SIMPP landed a big one in Donald Nelson, who now is familiarizing himself with industry problems. The MPPDA is reported to be angling for Eric Johnston who, so far, has not risen to the bait. According to a recent magazine article, if it isn't Johnston, it will be another 'name,' possibly a political figure.

"The affiliated producers probably will not relish suggestions from Allied in this matter and certainly the subject of these remarks will not thank us for our trouble. But a reading of the Congressional Record for June 28 reminds us that the affiliated interests have in their own ranks a man of distinction and prestige who would admirably fill the bill as head of MPPDA. He would not be a mere 'front,' but a real

(Continued on last page)

**"Road to Alcatraz" with Robert Lowery and June Storey**

(Republic, July 10; time, 60 min.)

A fair program murder mystery melodrama. Parts of it are too far-fetched to be plausible; but persons who are not too particular about such defects should be entertained, for the action moves at a steady pace, and it has considerable suspense. The story revolves around a young attorney, who, suspected of murdering his law partner, doubts his own innocence because he walked in his sleep and could not account for his movements on the night of the crime. The manner in which he traps the murderer and clears himself holds one's interest throughout. Unlike the title suggests, the picture is void of gangster doings:—

Robert Lowery, an attorney, and June Storey, his wife, are elated when they receive word that their investment in a business deal shared by Lowery, William Forrest, his partner, Charles Gordon, a college friend, and Clarence Kolb, a financier, would result in handsome profits. Lowery, a sleepwalker, awakes on the following morning and finds that the condition of his clothes indicate that he had visited Forrest during the night. Bewildered, he goes to Forrest's apartment, where he finds the man murdered amid evidence that points to him as the killer. Recalling that, by the terms of the deal, the death of one of the partners would increase the profits of the others, Lowery conceals the evidence and decides to investigate. He communicates with Gordon and, through him, finds reason to suspect Kolb of the murder. He visits Kolb's home and discovers what he considers conclusive evidence of the man's guilt. Meanwhile the police decide that Lowery was guilty and hurry to his home to arrest him. Lowery, seeking a chance to talk with Gordon, escapes from the police and, in the basement of his home, picks up what he believes to be his dropped fraternity pin. In Gordon's hotel room, while analyzing the crime, Lowery notices that he was wearing his pin and realizes that the pin he had found belonged to Gordon. Quickly, he concludes that Gordon had committed the murder and had planted the evidence against him. Gordon, unmasked, tries to kill Lowery, but the young attorney is saved by the timely arrival of the police.

Dwight V. Babcock and Jerry Sackheim wrote the screen play, Sidney Picker produced it, and Nick Grinde directed it. The cast includes Grant Withers, Iris Adrian and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"And Then There Were None" with Barry Fitzgerald, Louis Hayward and Walter Huston**

(20th Century-Fox, September; time, 97 min.)

Based on Agatha Christie's widely-read story of the same title, which was produced as a Broadway play under the title, "Ten Little Indians," this murder mystery melodrama is a good entertainment of its type. The story unfolds in an interesting manner, and excitement and suspense are well sustained throughout since all the characters are cloaked in an air of mystery, and one does not learn the murderer's identity until the very end. The story has its setting in a lonely house on an isolated island, and it contains all the eerie effects generally employed in thrillers. The second half, in which the mystery thickens, is the most

exciting, particularly in the closing scenes, where Louis Hayward, through a clever ruse, traps the murderer. It is the sort of picture that should be seen from the beginning, and exhibitors should urge their patrons not to disclose the ending to their friends so that they, too, may enjoy the surprise climax. The acting is good, and the picture has been produced well.

The story revolves around ten assorted people, unknown to each other, who are tricked into visiting the home of a stranger on a lonely island off the English coast. Once on the island, they find their mysterious host absent, but at dinner the ten guests are startled by a voice, which identifies itself as that of the host and which announces that each of them is to be punished by death, because specific crimes each had committed were unprovable by the rules of legal evidence. Shortly after the accusations, the guests institute a search for their mysterious host. Their search proves fruitless, and they soon learn that there were no means by which they could leave the island. They find a statue of ten little Indian figures and, on the piano, they also find a copy of the "Ten Little Indians" nursery rhyme. One by one, each of the guests meets sudden death mysteriously, each dying in accordance with the words of the nursery rhyme, and after each death one of the Indian figures disappears. Gripped by fear, the remaining guests suspect one another until all are murdered but two—Louis Hayward and June Duprez, who loved each other. Hayward, through a clever ruse, clears up the mystery by trapping one of the guests, Barry Fitzgerald, an erratic judge with a distorted sense of justice, who had feigned his own murder in order to commit the other killings undetected. He dies by his own hand.

Dudley Nichols wrote the screen play, and Rene Clair produced and directed it. The cast includes Roland Young, C. Aubrey Smith, Judith Anderson, Mischa Auer, Richard Haydn, Queenie Leonard and others. It is a Popular Pictures, Inc., production.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"The Beautiful Cheat" with Noah Beery, Jr. and Bonita Granville**

(Universal, July 20; time, 59 min.)

Just a mildly amusing program comedy, with some music. There is very little to the plot, which concerns itself with a professor who studies a wayward girl in preparation for a book on sociology, without realizing that his subject was masquerading as a delinquent. A few of the situations are amusing, but for the most part the comedy is dull. The love interest is ineffective, and there is no human interest since none of the characters are presented in an appealing manner. The outcome is quite obvious, and there is nothing to the story to really hold one's interest:—

Noah Beery, Jr., a young professor, asks Edward Fielding, an associate, to find a wayward girl who would consent to reside in his home so that he could study her in preparation for a new book on sociology. Unable to find a proper subject, Fielding facetiously arranges with Bonita Granville, a secretary in a detention home, to pose as a delinquent. Bonita, pretending to be a youthful miscreant, upsets Beery's household and infuriates his spinster sisters (Margaret Irving and Sarah Selby), as well as Irene Ryan, his middle-aged secretary. Beery becomes fond of Bonita and de-



cides to adopt her, but, when he learns from his attorney that married couples only can adopt children, he proposes to his secretary. Bonita, who had fallen in love with Beery, learns of the impending marriage and leaves him. Later, when she discovers his reason for proposing to Irene, she arranges to meet him at a night-club to reveal the truth about herself. While waiting at the club for Bonita, Beery becomes involved with Carol Hughes, a brazen night-club singer, and is caught by Irene, who cancels her engagement to him. He promptly proposes to Carol, but regrets his haste when Bonita arrives and reveals that she was old enough to marry him herself. Beery's sisters take matters in hand and, by threatening Carol, get her to release Beery from his proposal, leaving him free to wed Bonita.

Ben Markson wrote the screen play, and Charles Barton produced and directed it. The cast includes Edward Gargan and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"On Stage Everybody" with Peggy Ryan and Jack Oakie**

(Universal, July 13; time, 75 min.)

Fair. It is a lively comedy with music, but it does not rise above the level of program fare. Its chief appeal will probably be to the younger element, for it has plentiful music of the popular type. Not much can be said for the story, which is of the backstage variety, for it is rather silly. Moreover, it serves for the most part as a prelude to the musical sequences. The best parts of the picture are the dance numbers executed expertly by Peggy Ryan and by Johnny Coy, the young man who danced sensationally in "That's the Spirit." The antics of Jack Oakie, as a veteran vaudevillian with an aversion to radio, are occasionally funny. Much of the comedy, however, is ineffective, because of its ridiculousness. The story, in part, has been suggested by the former radio program, of the same title, which served to introduce new talent on the air:—

Informed by the manager of a small-town burlesque theatre that he and his daughter (Peggy Ryan) must participate in a radio program sponsored by the theatre, Oakie, who blamed radio for the downfall of vaudeville, quits the show. He and Peggy return to New York, where their friends urge them to accept jobs in a department store. Reporting for work, Oakie is assigned to the radio department. He goes berserk, smashing most of the radios before he is arrested and put in jail. Otto Kruger, Peggy's wealthy maternal grandfather, who owned an important broadcasting company, bails Oakie out of jail and convinces him that Peggy should suffer no longer because of his "radiophobia." Oakie consents to send Peggy to live with Kruger. Left to himself, Oakie retires to an actors' home. There, he is finally won over to radio by a World Series broadcast, and he conceives an idea for a radio program that would present both old and new talent. With Peggy's help, he sells the idea to Kruger, who agrees to give the new show a trial. The program is given the title, "On Stage Everybody" and, with Oakie as master of ceremonies, it becomes an immediate success.

Warren Wilson and Oscar Brodney wrote the screen play, Mr. Wilson produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it. Lou Goldberg was associate pro-

ducer. The cast includes, among others, Julie London, Esther Dale, Wallace Ford, Milburn Stone, the King Sisters, and the ten winners of the "On Stage Everybody" radio contest as themselves.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Her Highness and the Bellboy" with Hedy Lamarr, Robert Walker and June Allyson**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 108 min.)

Fairly good. The story, which revolves around a princess from a mythical European country, and around a New York bellboy who imagines that she is in love with him, might be classed as a modern fairy tale, but, if one accepts the story for what it is, one should find it pleasurable, for it is a pleasant entertainment, with considerable human interest and pathos, and with delightful comedy. While all the main characters are pleasant, the sympathy of the spectator is centered mainly around June Allyson, a sensitive, bedridden invalid, whose deep love the bellboy fails to recognize until the end. One sequence, depicting a fairy tale dream of June's, in which she dances gaily, is impressive. Another sequence, which is highly amusing, is the one where the princess (Hedy Lamarr) and the bellboy (Robert Walker) become involved in a free-for-all barroom brawl, with the princess landing in jail. The picture is aided considerably by the good performances of the cast. The action slows down occasionally, and some judicious cutting, particularly at the beginning, would be helpful:—

Hedy visits New York, hoping to meet Warner Anderson, an American newspaperman, with whom she had fallen in love when he visited her country six years previously. At her hotel, Walker mistakes her for a maid and almost loses his job, but Hedy, amused, asks the hotel manager to assign him as her personal attendant. Hedy arranges a meeting with Anderson, who, realizing that her royal status would mar their happiness, purposely informs her that his love had cooled. Meanwhile Walker, misunderstanding Hedy's kindly interest, conceives the idea that she had fallen in love with him, much to the distress of June Allyson, who loved him deeply and who looked forward to his daily visits at her bedside. Hedy, seeking to meet Anderson once again, asks Walker to take her to a barroom, where Anderson did most of his work. There, they become involved in a brawl, and Hedy, along with others, is taken to jail. Bailed out by Anderson, Hedy returns to her hotel and learns that her uncle, the king, was dead, and that she was now queen. She prepares to leave for Europe, and informs Walker that he may accompany her if he wishes. Mistaking her kindness for a proposal of marriage, Walker is elated. When he goes to say goodbye to June, however, he realizes that he loved her and not the princess. He returns to the hotel and informs Hedy that she must give him up. Hedy, realizing that Walker, in order to enjoy real happiness, had rejected what he thought was his chance to be a king, decides to follow his example—she abdicates in order to marry Anderson.

Richard Connell and Gladys Lehman wrote the screen play, Joe Pasternak produced it, and Richard Thorpe directed it. The cast includes "Rags" Raglund, Carl Esmond, Agnes Moorehead and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

leader and he would not have to take time out to learn the business.

"We refer to Hon. Frank C. Walker, who has just retired as Postmaster General of the United States.

"The choice of the Postmaster General and Chairman of the dominant political party conforms to a pattern. The tribute paid Mr. Walker in the House of Representatives attest his high standing in Government circles. He is popular in all branches of the industry and knows how to get along with people. Allied leaders who participated in the 5-5-5 Conference remember that while they did not always see eye-to-eye with Mr. Walker, they never lost their respect for him, or their tempers. With Mr. Walker at the head, independent producers, distributors and exhibitors could resume carrying their problems to 44th Street with assurance of courteous treatment and open-minded consideration."

There is little that I can add to Mr. Myers' excellent suggestion that Frank C. Walker be offered the leadership of the MPPDA. If the MPPDA is going to make a change—and a change is needed badly—it cannot hope to choose a better leader than Mr. Walker, who has earned the respect of every branch of the industry, and whose qualifications for the post now held by Will Hays have been so well outlined by Mr. Myers.

It has been my privilege to know Frank Walker personally. And to know the man is but to have an added reason for concurring heartily in what Mr. Myers has had to say of him. I know that his acceptance of the MPPDA leadership, should that organization be astute enough to offer the post to him, would be most beneficial to the industry as a whole.

### MPTOA LOSES A MEMBER

Warner Brothers Theatres, which for many years has been an associate member of the Motion Picture Theatre Owners of America, has resigned from that organization, effective July 1.

Ed Kuykendall, president of the MPTOA, who announced the resignation in a press release, said that no reason was given for Warners' withdrawal of their support and cooperation from his "national organization, which is now composed of 16 state and regional associations of theatre owners composed largely of independent exhibitors, but in which the important affiliated circuits have a special associate membership."

Pity poor Ed Kuykendall, for the resignation of the Warner Brothers theatres is indeed a bitter blow to his hybrid exhibitor organization, which, as most of you know, is producer-controlled, by virtue of the fact that the money for its upkeep comes from the producers' coffers, in the form of dues paid by the theatres they own.

Kuykendall says that no reason was given for the withdrawal. The reason however is obvious, not only to Kuykendall, but also to every informed industryite. It relates back to the action that Kuykendall took at Washington, in April 1944, when he visited Tom Clark, the then assistant attorney general in charge of the anti-trust division, and urged him to scrap the Consent Decree and to proceed with the prosecution of the anti-trust case against the defendant-distributors, at the same time prohibiting the affiliated cir-

cuits from expanding their theatre holdings. Kuykendall recommended also that, in the event the Department of Justice should feel it inadvisable to scrap the Decree, it should include in an amended decree certain stipulations (which he specified) that might have benefitted the independent exhibitors immensely if they had been adopted.

The recommendations Kuykendall made to the Department of Justice were so detrimental to the interest of the producers—his bosses—that his motive puzzled me, and I said so in these columns.

Shortly thereafter, as a result of Kuykendall's action, Joseph Bernhard, head of Warner Brothers' theatre department, resigned as a member of the MPTOA's board of directors. Immediately, Ed "craw-fished"; in an effort to appease Bernhard and probably other affiliated members of the board, he issued a bulletin to the effect that he had presented to the Department of Justice the views of his organization's independent members only, and that neither the affiliated nor the partly affiliated members were consulted in the matter. Ed's statement was a masterpiece of "double talk," a futile effort to bring Bernhard back into the ranks.

A few weeks later I learned from authoritative sources that Ed had called a meeting of the unaffiliated members of the MPTOA board of directors with a view to influencing them to compose a petition to the Department of Justice requesting that it drop the anti-trust suit against the major companies and that it grant to the independent exhibitors just enough reforms to appease them. But Kuykendall's board members, peeved by the excessive rentals they had to pay for film, refused to go along with the plan, and they drafted an entirely different petition, leaving Kuykendall in a position from which he could not retreat.

In discussing Kuykendall's action in the April 22, 1944 issue of this paper, I said that "if Kuykendall had sought the advice of a grammar school child, he would have been told that his action would prove disastrous to his organization's finances." I said also that "if any more resignations take place, I fear that Ed Kuykendall's meal ticket will be in danger, unless, of course, the remaining affiliated circuits increase their contributions so as to cover up the loss." Ed apparently realized the danger, for since that time not one of his numerous bulletins has contained any statement that might in any way displease his affiliated members.

Before closing this piece, I want to state, as I have often stated, that Kuykendall's claim that his organization is composed "largely of independent exhibitors" is just so much "bunk" aimed at painting the MPTOA as representative of *bona fide* independent exhibitors. It is true that some independent exhibitors belong to his organization, but they are so few in number that I doubt if their combined dues amount to more than a few thousand dollars, which is infinitesimal when compared to the many thousands of dollars poured into the organization's treasury by the producers' affiliated theatres for the purpose of using it as a "front."

Obviously, it does not require great imagination to understand that Kuykendall and the other MPTOA representatives must do the producers' bidding lest they put an end to all financial support.

And the proof of it is Warners' resignation.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, JULY 21, 1945

No. 29

### NO REISSUES BY METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

William F. Rodgers, vice-president and general sales manager of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, has announced that his company will not sell any reissues in conjunction with its new season's product.

Speaking to his sales staff at a special mid-season meeting held in Chicago last week, Rodgers stated that last year his company had tried out two reissues ("Naughty Marietta" and "Waterloo Bridge") and that, although these reissues had not been entirely disappointing from the standpoint of sales, they conflicted with new releases and interfered with the company's star-grooming policy.

Bill Rodgers' move is a step in the right direction, and he is to be congratulated.

This paper has maintained for many months that one of the worst distributor abuses to have come out of the war-time operations of the industry has been the injudicious though profitable (for the distributors) use of critical raw film stock for the making of new prints of reissues. They filled no public need; they were unwanted by exhibitors; and to add insult to injury, they were given life only by the use of raw stock in which the exhibitors had an undeniable stake.

Unhampered by regulatory restrictions, the producer-distributors have been and still are in a position to juggle their raw stock allocations in a manner aimed at perpetuating a "seller's market."

The pattern is clear: By releasing fewer pictures and giving them extended playing time in the key runs, and by controlling the number of prints of new features in circulation, the producer-distributors have been able to tighten their control of the film market and to set the stage for the sale of reissues, the prints of which, in most cases, come from raw stock that could have been used for prints of new features.

For example, Paramount, which has one of the largest backlogs of product in the industry, has used recently thousands of feet of rationed raw stock to make prints of "This Gun for Hire" and "Northwest Mounted Police," both reissues. Yet its new pictures repose in its vaults gathering dust, despite the exhibitors' crying need for them. Universal is another offender; it does not expect to complete its promised 1944-45 program because of the raw stock shortage, yet somehow it managed to find sufficient raw stock to make hundreds of prints of "East Side of Heaven" and "Imitation of Life," two reissues presently in release. Twentieth Century-Fox, too, has used much critical raw stock for new prints of "Call of the Wild." And, as we go to press, word comes that Columbia has joined the party by announcing that

"Mr. Deeds Goes to Town" and "Pennies from Heaven," two reissues, the prints of which are undoubtedly new, are now available for bookings.

These distributors might have had reason to use their rationed raw stock for prints of the aforementioned reissues if the public were clamoring for them. But the public has not clamored for reissues. The distributors are merely cashing in on a situation of their own making, without regard for the wishes of the public. And the exhibitors, plagued by the product shortage, find themselves faced with the choice of either booking the reissues at unheard of rentals, or closing their theatres until new product becomes available. It is, in other words, the old "squeeze play."

As already said, Bill Rodgers is to be congratulated for his wise decision to eliminate reissues from his sales program. It is to be hoped that the sales manager of the other companies will be astute enough to follow his lead.

### SELLING AWAY FROM CIRCUITS

The latest of Samuel Goldwyn's battles over rental terms for one of his pictures is taking place with the Warner Brothers theatre circuit.

According to reports in the trade papers, Goldwyn, because of his inability to obtain terms and preferred playing time suitable to him for "Wonder Man," has decided to sell the picture away from the Warner circuit, and he is now offering it to that circuit's competitors in all the territories affected.

A controversy of similar nature is going on in the New York territory, where Paramount, unable to conclude satisfactory deals with the Skouras, Brandt, and Century circuits, three of the most powerful independent theatre chains operating in the New York area, is making some of its pictures available to competitive subsequent-run theatres.

When an affiliated circuit such as Warners, or powerful independent circuits such as Skouras, Brandt, and Century, come to the conclusion that the terms asked of them are so unreasonable as to make a deal unprofitable, their refusal to meet the terms should encourage every independent exhibitor, who finds himself in the same position, to take a similar stand.

There have been other times when a distributor decided to sell away from some powerful circuit because of inability to agree on terms. Immediately many independent exhibitors, who had been loud in their complaints that rental terms were too high, fell all over themselves in a rush to buy the pictures away

(Continued on last page)

**"Our Vines Have Tender Grapes" with Edward G. Robinson and Margaret O'Brien**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 105 min.)

A deeply appealing drama. It is a heart-warming, wholesome entertainment, excellent for the family trade. The story, which revolves around a small Wisconsin farming community, is simple and episodic, but so well directed and acted, that one's attention is gripped from beginning to end. It has deep human interest, and some of the situations should bring tears to the eyes, while others should provoke hearty laughter. Most of the action centers around Margaret O'Brien and Jackie "Butch" Jenkins, rural youngsters, depicting their youthful joys, sorrow, squabbles and pranks. Both of them give splendid performances. A most gripping situation is the one in which the children nearly lose their lives when swept into a raging flood stream while sailing in a bathtub. The emotional reaction of the parents when both children are pulled to safety is so touching that it brings a lump to one's throat. A highly dramatic sequence is the one in which the community comes to the aid of a proud neighbor, who had lost his life's work when his new barn burned to the ground. Edward G. Robinson, as Margaret's father, is excellent, winning one's sympathy by his good-heartedness and by his sympathetic understanding of the workings of his little daughter's mind. There is an appealing romance between James Craig, as the local editor, and Frances Gifford, as the schoolteacher, who lend their efforts to bring good to the community.

Briefly, the episodic-like story revolves around the day by day adventures of Margaret, and around her relationship with her parents—Robinson, her father, who worshipped her, and Agnes Moorehead, her mother, a practical sort, who was devoted to both of them. Shown are Margaret's sorrow when she accidentally kills a squirrel, and her joy when her father, to console her, makes her a gift of a new-born calf; the happiness of the family when they exchange gifts on Christmas Day; Margaret's recital of the story of the Nativity in school; the children's near-tragedy when they sail a tin bathtub in the spring flood waters; and the collection taken in church to help the neighbor who lost his barn, and the meagre contributions until Margaret offers her precious calf, shaming the farmers into making big-hearted gifts of cattle and feed. All this is simply and movingly told. A by-plot concerns the desire of Miss Gifford to return to Milwaukee because life in the small community seemed small and dull to her. Her love for Craig, however, and her eventual understanding of the community's spirit, cause her to change her mind.

Dalton Trumbo wrote the screen play based on the book, of the same title, by George Victor Martin. Robert Sisk produced it, and Roy Rowland directed it. The cast includes Morris Carnovsky, Sara Haden, Dorothy Morris and others.

**"The Caribbean Mystery" with James Dunn**

(20th Century-Fox, September; time, 65 min.)

A rather ordinary program murder-mystery melodrama, but good enough to round out the lower half of a double bill where audiences are not too fussy about story material. The plot is loosely written, obvious, and somewhat implausible, yet it manages to hold one's interest to a fair degree since it is not until the end that the mystery is solved. The melodramatic events in the closing scenes, during which the hero traps the murderer, holds one in suspense. James

Dunn, who did such good work in "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn," plays the detective fairly well, but he is deserving of better material than this. There is practically no comedy relief, and though there is some romantic interest it is of no importance:—

Because of the strange disappearance of several people in the swamps of an island in the Caribbean Sea, Roy Gordon, governor of the island, asks James Dunn, a private American detective, to investigate the mystery. Several attempts are made on Dunn's life shortly after his arrival, and his assistant is murdered mysteriously. Sheila Ryan, a local hotel hostess, who had been a friend of the murdered man, informs Dunn that he had suspected that someone in the administration was responsible for the strange disappearance of the missing men. Shortly after, Sheila, too, is murdered, and William Forrest, the island's chief of police, disappears. Dunn, on the strength of the information given to him by Sheila, travels into the jungle swamps and, with the aid of Eddie Ryan, the governor's son, discovers a hidden community where a band of men, led by Roy Roberts, had dug up buried pirate's gold and were about to leave the island with their loot. Dunn, establishing that the gang had disposed of the missing persons lest they learn the secret of the buried treasure, captures Roberts and rescues the police chief, who had been held prisoner. On their way back to town, the police chief wounds Roberts when he tries to make a getaway. Roberts dies, but Dunn, believing that one of the island's officials had been Roberts' boss, keeps the death a secret. He places the body in a local hospital room and informs the officials that Roberts, "wounded," would be in condition to talk that evening. Later, at the hospital, Dunn traps Reed Hadley, the island's coroner, in the act of stabbing Roberts' lifeless body, and compels him to confess that he was the government official behind the scenes.

Jack Andrews and Leonard Praskins wrote the screen play from the novel, "Murder in Trinidad," William Girard produced it, and Robert Webb directed it. Unobjectionable morally.

**"The Falcon in San Francisco" with Tom Conway and Robert Armstrong**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 66 min.)

Hampered by a plot that becomes more confusing than intriguing, this latest of the "Falcon" mystery melodramas is moderately entertaining program fare. It should, however, prove exciting to those who do not object to far-fetched and implausible situations. The first half is rather slow, given more to talk than to action, but the second half picks up speed, holding one in suspense because of the danger to the "Falcon" as he seeks to unravel the mystery behind the several murders. Tom Conway, as the private investigator, gives his usual suave performance, and Edward Brophy, as his not-too-bright aide, is mildly amusing:—

Conway, en route to San Francisco for a vacation, offers to take charge of seven-year-old Sharyn Moffett when her nurse is found murdered in her berth. While taking Sharyn to her home, Conway is arrested on a fake kidnapping charge and is subsequently bailed out by Faye Helm, head of a gang of silk thieves, who orders her henchmen to beat Conway as a warning to keep away from Sharyn and to make no effort to solve the nurse's murder. Conway, however, determines to investigate. He visits Sharyn's home, where he finds evidence that the nurse's husband was first mate on a freight shipping line. Fol-



lowing up this clue, Conway learns that Robert Armstrong, head of the line, was a former notorious gangster, and that Sharyn and her older sister, Rita Corday, were his daughters. Armstrong admits his identity and informs Conway that Faye's gang had compelled him to work with them under threat of exposing his past to Sharyn. He informs Conway also that the thieves were sailing that night on one of his ships with a cargo of stolen silk, and asks his aid in capturing them. Once aboard the ship, Armstrong knocks out the ship's engineer, leaving no one to watch the steam gauge, and reveals his intention to kill all aboard, including Conway, in order to preserve the secret of his identity. Conway, realizing that Armstrong had no intention of going straight and that he was guilty of the several murders that had occurred, creates a diversion and manages to get off the ship just before it explodes from excessive steam pressure, killing Armstrong and the thieves.

Robert Kent and Ben Markson wrote the screen play, Maurice Geraghty produced it, and Joseph H. Lewis directed it. Unobjectionable morally.

**"Christmas in Connecticut" with  
Dennis Morgan and Barbara Stanwyck**

(Warner Bros., Aug. 11; time, 101 min.)

With a little less footage and a bit more care in the treatment, this story might have been an hilarious farce. As it stands, it is fairly amusing. It may, however, do better than average business on the strength of the players' popularity. The action revolves around Barbara Stanwyck, as a magazine feature writer, whose glowing articles about the idyllic life she led on a Connecticut farm with her husband and baby had won her a host of readers. The comedy is provoked by the complications that arise when her publisher, unaware that she was unmarried and that she lived alone in a New York apartment, invites himself and a young Navy officer to spend the Christmas holidays on her "farm." There are occasional moments of high comedy as a result of Miss Stanwyck's efforts to carry on her deception, but these come too infrequently, causing one's interest to lag. One or two of the situations are somewhat suggestive, but they are not offensive:—

In love with Dennis Morgan, a Navy officer, Joyce Compton, a nurse in a Naval hospital, seeks to instill in him a sense of domesticity in the hope that he will marry her. She writes to Sydney Greenstreet, Barbara's publisher, suggesting that Morgan be invited to spend a few days at Barbara's "farm." Greenstreet, sensing an opportunity to gain publicity and to increase his circulation, orders Barbara to entertain Morgan over the holidays, and invites himself along. Barbara, who got all her domestic information from S. Z. Sakall, a restaurateur, and from Reginald Gardiner, an architect, who owned the farm she wrote about, agrees to Greenstreet's wishes lest he learn that she had perpetrated a hoax. In a complete panic, she agrees to marry Gardiner, who had proposed to her frequently, and arranges for the wedding to take place at the farm prior to the arrival of the guests. The guests, however, arrive prematurely, causing a postponement of the wedding. From then on matters become complicated; Barbara falls in love with Morgan and finds one excuse after another to postpone her marriage to Gardiner; and Morgan, in love with Barbara, does not know what to do about it because of her "marital status." After much confusion, during which Greenstreet discovers Barbara's

duplicity, Barbara finds herself unemployed, but through the efforts of Sakall, whose cooking delighted Greenstreet, the publisher re-hires her at a substantial raise. Meanwhile Joyce had fallen in love with Frank Jenks, Morgan's buddy, leaving him free to marry Barbara.

Lionel Houser and Adele Commandini wrote the screen play, William Jacobs produced it, and Peter Godfrey directed it. The cast includes Una O'Connor, Dick Elliott and others. Unobjectionable morally.

**"Anchors Aweigh" with Gene Kelly,  
Frank Sinatra and Kathryn Grayson**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 139 min.)

Very good mass entertainment. Photographed in Technicolor, the production is extremely lavish, has good comedy, a romance, tuneful songs, and effective dancing. The story is thin, but it has some human interest, and there are so many humorous situations that one is kept laughing most of the way. The music ranges from classical to popular, featuring the brilliant piano-playing of Jose Iturbi, the crystal-clear singing of Kathryn Grayson, and the "crooning" of Frank Sinatra, who, incidentally, should draw many additional squeals from his "bobby-sox" admirers because of his dancing in one sequence. While each of these performers contributes much to the entertainment values, it is Gene Kelly who walks off with the honors; he not only joins Sinatra in singing a few songs, but he also figures importantly in the comedy relief, which he handles effectively, and his dancing is the most impressive thing about the picture, particularly the sequence in which he dances with a cartoon character as a partner. It is a live action and animation sequence, superior to the technique developed by Walt Disney in "The Three Caballeros." Most of the action takes place in Hollywood, with a few of the scenes staged on the MGM lot, giving the picture a colorful background:—

Given a four-day leave from their ship, Kelly and Sinatra go to Hollywood in search of a good time. Sinatra, a shy Brooklyn boy, follows Kelly everywhere, much to his annoyance. As Kelly ponders how to get rid of Sinatra, a policeman compels both of them to accompany him to a police station to help him with a little boy (Dean Stockwell), who had run away from home to join the Navy. The youngster agrees to go home if Kelly and Sinatra would accompany him to meet his guardian aunt, Kathryn Grayson, a movie extra who hoped to become a famous singer. At the boy's home, Kelly, noticing that Sinatra was attracted to Kathryn, tries to further the romance by telling her that Sinatra was a good friend of Jose Iturbi, and that he could arrange a screen test for her. The boys, to make good this boast, soon find themselves spending most of their furlough in a futile attempt to meet Iturbi in order to arrange for the test. Meanwhile Kathryn meets Iturbi in the studio commissary and, assuming that he knew all about her, talks excitedly to him about the test. Iturbi, baffled at first, soon guesses what had happened, and he obligingly agrees to make good the boys' promise. As a result of her test, Kathryn becomes a star. It all ends with Kelly in Kathryn's arms, and with Sinatra in the arms of Pamela Britton, a waitress from Brooklyn, who spoke and understood his language.

Isobel Lennart wrote the screen play, Joe Pasternak produced it, and George Sidney directed it. The cast includes "Rags" Ragland, Billy Gilbert, Carlos Ramirez and others.

from their prior-run competitor, no matter how stiff the terms.

Paying exorbitant film rentals for the privilege of buying product away from a stronger competitor is, at best, only a temporary advantage, and frequently a costly one. In the long run, such action is definitely harmful, for it serves to defeat the independent exhibitors' constant fight for "live-and-let-live" rental terms.

Here is an opportunity for the independent exhibitors to make known to the distributors their determination to bring film prices down. Don't rush to buy just because a distributor decides to sell away from your powerful competitor, unless, of course, the terms are such as would leave you with a fair profit. Follow the lead of the circuits—hold out! Only then will the distributors be made to realize that rental terms must be brought down to an equitable level.

### RESTRICTING TRAVELING CARNIVALS

During the past week, two exhibitors, each from a different part of the country, have written to me on the same subject — traveling carnivals that stop in their respective towns annually, affecting the attendance at their theatres to a considerable degree.

One of these exhibitors points out that these carnivals are permitted to operate within the limits of his town for a nominal license fee, and that, through low class side-shows, as well as gambling devices, they take out of the town thousands of dollars. Yet the small license fee paid by the carnival's operators is far from enough to reimburse the town for the police and fire protection provided during the carnival's stay, let alone the inestimable expense to the town in handling criminal violations bred by the carnival's operations.

This same exhibitor adds that those who suffer most from the traveling shows are the town's legitimate merchants and business men, who have thousands of dollars invested in different enterprises, and who help in a large measure to support the town through their payment of different forms of taxes and of license fees.

The other exhibitor, whose complaint is along the same lines as the first one, has asked me if I have knowledge of an ordinance that has been passed by any City Council, which, in effect, would impose a discouraging license fee, as well as limit the number of days a carnival may operate in a town.

A check of my file on the subject discloses that such an ordinance was brought to my attention in 1935, except that it does not place a limitation on the number of days a carnival may operate. The license fee, however, is discouraging enough to make an extended stay unprofitable. The ordinance, which follows, comes from a town of about fifteen thousand population, in the state of Ohio, but I am suppressing the name of the city because, at the time the ordinance was submitted to me, the City Clerk requested that I do so:

#### "AN ORDINANCE TO REGULATE AND LICENSE CARNIVALS.

"Be it ordained by the City Council of . . . . ., State of Ohio.

"That any person, persons, firm or corporation being the owner, manager or proprietor of any traveling carnival or part thereof consisting of two or more shows, exhibitions or other services of public entertainment, before engaging in said business in the City of . . . . ., Ohio, shall pay to the Mayor of said City three hundred dollars (\$300.00) for the first day said business is conducted and three hundred dollars (\$300.00) for each additional day said business is conducted in said City, and said sum shall be payable for the use of said City for the purchasing of regulating said business in said City.

"Any person, persons, firm or corporation violating any of the provisions of this ordinance, or failing to pay the license required by the terms of this ordinance, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) nor more than one thousand dollars (\$1000.00)."

From other correspondence in my file, I note that several towns in Texas have passed ordinances to the effect that tent shows or carnivals using tents are considered a fire hazard and, as such, are not permitted to operate within the town's limits. Such ordinances, of course, tend to eliminate the undesirable competition insofar as the exhibitor is concerned, for, as a rule, the carnival's operators do not like to pitch their tents at a spot that is too distant from the main business center.

The strongest argument an exhibitor can advance to induce his City Council to pass an ordinance making carnival license fees discouraging is that the police and fire protection required for such shows are costly to the city.

If your city or state has any ordinance covering carnivals or any other type of traveling shows, send a copy to this office, so that I may pass the information along to other exhibitors.

### REASSURING NEWS

Boxoffice reports that Tom C. Clark, in outlining his policy as the new Attorney General, and in discussing the anti-trust laws, stated in a recent interview that "the spirit of the antitrust laws is intimately linked with the values which the free peoples of the world are fighting to maintain. American business, large or small, has nothing to fear from the Department of Justice so long as it operates by the rules; but those who get off-side must prepare to have the whistle blown on them and to pay the penalty . . . I shall be the people's lawyer—the people's lawyer to see that the innocent are protected, the guilty punished, monopoly trusts and restraints in interstate business prevented, the public purse guarded, civil liberty preserved and constitutional guarantees held inviolate."

Boxoffice reports also that the Government's anti-trust action against the major companies looms important on Clark's agenda, and that he emphasized his determination to fight current anti-trust suits "all the way."

If any of you has had any misgivings about how the new Attorney General feels about the forthcoming anti-trust trial in October, his statements should indeed be reassuring.



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, JULY 28, 1945

No. 30

### MGM POINTS THE WAY!

Around this time of each year, when the sales forces of the different distributors convene to formulate sales policies in preparation for the new selling season, each of them invariably hands out glowing statements that stress the good will existing between the company and its customers, and, in most cases, the statements contain also some reference to the company's willingness to recognize the hardships of deserving exhibitors and to make adjustments if the facts warrant such action.

Few of these statements mean anything, for most of them are cloaked in ambiguous language, such as might be used in addressing naive persons and infants, to whom promises can be made with the hope that they may be either overlooked or forgotten. Rarely do these companies outline clearly, either their policy, or the rules of conduct by which their sales forces are to carry out the policy. Unhampered by any specific rules of conduct, the salesmen in the field, seeking to improve their records, disregard their company's announced "live-and-let-live" policy, extracting from the exhibitors all that the traffic will bear. And the home office executives, pleased with the increased revenues, are hardly inclined to take disciplinary action against a subordinate who violated a policy that was announced with a tongue-in-cheek attitude to begin with. In other words, most announced sales policies prior to a new selling season are just so many soap bubbles blown at the exhibitors.

It is, therefore, like a breath of fresh air when one company comes forth with an announcement of policy that neither minces words nor resorts to ambiguities. That company is Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

The MGM policy, which was drawn up by William F. Rodgers, vice-president and general sales manager, and presented to his district and division managers at a meeting held in Chicago two weeks ago, is based upon a forthright, clearly defined 19-point program, which leaves no doubt as to how MGM intends to deal with its customers, and as to what it expects in return.

While the policy is no cure-all for the exhibitor-distributor disputes that have kept the industry in a turmoil, it is an honest, sincere effort to recognize the exhibitors' problems and to do something about them. The policy is a great step forward toward a more amicable relationship between buyer and seller, for it is based on principles that allow for flexibility in the treatment of customers in accordance with their specific problems. It is a policy that recognizes the importance of customer good will, which, as defined by Mr. Rodgers, "is the evidence of confidence, one in the other, and based on the performance of both. It is not a one way passage, or a fair weather experience, but a reciprocal understanding applicable to good and bad conditions alike and can only be lasting where the sincerity of purpose is an accepted fact."

For the enlightenment of its subscribers, HARRISON'S REPORTS is herewith reproducing the MGM 19-point program in its entirety:

"1. If we make a mistake in designating a picture in a bracket higher than justified by results, it is not necessary or expected that our customer be required to ask for an adjustment in terms, but when called to our attention with the supporting facts, and they must be facts, we will reclassify the picture in the bracket where it rightfully belongs.

"2. There is no policy in our company that prevents one of our top bracket pictures being reclassified even to the

balance or lower bracket, if that is the proper classification based on results at that theatre.

"3. We intend to retain our right of designation as there is no other means we know of to intelligently price our merchandise.

"4. We intend to continue to sell on the sliding scale; that this basis is considered by us and by thousands of our customers as being a fair method of dealing.

"5. We will, where justified, change the unit figure if results of record disclose a hardship, and by hardship I mean either a loss, or a minimum profit to the theatre on pictures of ours played on this basis.

"6. We recognize the effect because of shifting populations, industrial inactivity and other reasons, in some small localities, on some of the subsequent runs, and I mean later runs in cities and small towns, and are prepared in such situations to adjust our terms to meet present-day business levels. In such situations we are prepared to forego so-called preferred time in exchange for what our managers consider its equivalent in the way of mid-week playing time. In such instances it can be incorporated in the contract with our customers as optional.

"7. This is a matter of negotiation between our representatives and our customers and in our desire to help in specific situations which need help, it is not to be considered that we are going to forego entirely preferred time, because, to the contrary, we expect to continue to seek and we hope to get our pictures played under the most favorable circumstances. But we do want to do everything in our power to assist deserving cases.

"8. We deplore the thought that exhibitors must come, as they cite it, with 'hat in hand' looking for an adjustment. That is very definitely contrary to our policy, and the sliding scale was devised to automatically take care of an adjustment. So far as flat rentals are concerned, we can have no knowledge of the results unless we are informed, and we are prepared to rectify any unintentional error made by reclassifying the picture immediately when authentic facts justifying it are presented.

"9. Our branch and district managers have authority to adjudicate what appear to be unintentional errors; they can when justified adjudicate any business contracts.

"10. We do not want, much less expect, any unfair terms or advantages.

"11. Our policy of fair dealing will be carried out in the future as in the past.

"12. We do not exact as a policy, home office approval of re-classification or adjustment in terms when presented with facts.

"13. It is not necessary for our customers to come or write to New York for relief, but if it is not granted where absolutely justified they are invited to lay their case before us for consideration and attention.

"14. For some time we have been cognizant of the problems of what we term the sub-subsequent runs. Our definition of this type of operation is a theatre following the key runs in a zone located generally within the corporate limits of a metropolitan city, not necessarily the second run in a city but those which follow the key or first runs in individual zones. Hence, for this type of run and for this type only, we will offer the pictures sold in a group on a basis whereby those who desire can lease such pictures in the top

(Continued on last page)

### **"Jealousy" with John Loder and Jane Randolph**

(Republic, July 23; time, 71 min.)

Good acting by the players makes this drama fairly interesting, but it is not a cheerful entertainment, for throughout the characters are shown as being unhappy. Particularly unpleasant is the character of the heroine's husband, who is unbelievably selfish and cruel. The plot revolves around their unhappy marriage, and around her falling in love with a kindly doctor, whose female assistant becomes insanely jealous of their love. There is a touch of murder-mystery in connection with the husband's death. The story has some human interest, but there is no comedy relief. Sympathy is felt for Jane Randolph, the wife, because of her sincere efforts to save her marriage despite her husband's ill-treatment. The doctor, too, is a sympathetic character, for, though Jane is convicted of her husband's murder, he marries her and determines to prove her innocence:—

Because of his inability to obtain gainful employment in the United States, Nils Asther, an impoverished refugee, who had been a renowned writer in Europe, becomes embittered and taunts his wife for driving a taxi to help support him. He tries to commit suicide, but Jane prevents him and hides the revolver. Sometime later, Jane becomes friendly with John Loder, a doctor, whom she had met as a passenger in her taxi. Their friendship soon turns to love, and Jane, realizing that Asther would not agree to a divorce, meets Loder secretly. Karen Morley, Loder's assistant, inwardly resented Jane because she loved Loder herself, but she pretended friendship to gain Joan's confidence. Asther, suspecting that Jane had fallen in love with someone else, decides to take her to Mexico. Jane revolts and leaves the house, placing the hidden revolver in her purse to protect herself from his wrath. Later, while shopping with Karen, she loses the purse. She returns home and discovers Asther dead, shot through the head. The police list him as a suicide, but Karen, communicating with Hugo Hass, Asther's close friend, cleverly builds up a case against Jane and goads him into reporting her to the police. Jane is arrested and convicted of the crime. Loder, believing in Jane, marries her before she goes to prison, then sets out to clear her. Through a clever ruse, he unmasks Karen as the killer, compelling her to admit that she tried to get Jane out of the way because she wanted him for herself. Jane, absolved of the killing, rejoins her happy husband.

Arnold Phillips and Gustav Machaty wrote the screen play. Mr. Machaty produced and directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Hidden Eye" with Edward Arnold and Frances Rafferty**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 69 min.)

An interesting program murder-mystery melodrama, in which Edward Arnold re-enacts the role of a blind detective, the part he played in MGM's "Eyes in the Night," a 1942 release. One's attention is held throughout, for the story has been worked out logically. Since one knows early in the proceedings just who committed the murders, the interest lies in the manner in which Arnold tricks the guilty person into making an incriminating move. The closing scenes, where Arnold, though blind, subdues the killer, are exciting. Friday, the detective's "seeing-eye" dog, is very good. There is a good sprinkling of comedy to relieve the tension:—

Raymond Largay, wealthy owner of a tin mine in Sumatra, fears for his life; two of his relatives had been murdered mysteriously, and in both cases the killer had left a cryptic note, heavily perfumed, relating to treachery in Sumatra. Ray Collins, Largay's lawyer, insists that the murders had some connection with his client's dealings in Sumatra. A third relative is murdered under circumstances that cause the police to suspect Paul Langton, whose deceased father had lost a fortune in Sumatra as Largay's partner. Frances Rafferty, Langton's fiancée and Largay's niece, believes her sweetheart innocent and calls Arnold into the case. She gives

him a doily, on which one of the cryptic notes had been placed, and which had been impregnated with the heavy perfume. Working on this slim clue, Arnold, aided by William Phillips, his bodyguard, succeeds in learning the ingredients of the perfume and, through this information, discovers circumstantial evidence that leads him to suspect Collins, the lawyer, of the murders. Lacking positive proof, Arnold deliberately arranges for Collins to become aware of his suspicions in the hope that he would make an incriminating move. Collins, fearing Arnold, kidnaps his "seeing-eye" dog and lures both the detective and his bodyguard to a hideout. There, he imprisons both men and admits to them that he had committed the murders as part of a scheme to gain control of Largay's wealth. Promising to dispose of them later, Collins leaves for Largay's estate to carry out a plan that would, not only mark Frances' boy-friend as the killer, but also result in his death. The plan is foiled, however, when Arnold and Phillips succeed in escaping from the hideout and in arriving at the estate in time to expose Collins to the police.

George Harmon Coxe and Harry Ruskin wrote the screen play, Robert Sisk produced it, and Richard Whorf directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Guest Wife" with Claudette Colbert and Don Ameche**

(United Artists, July 27; time, 88 min.)

A fairly amusing farce. It is due mostly to the good performance given by Claudette Colbert that one remains interested in the proceedings. The story itself is thin and familiar; it revolves around a war correspondent who, having deceived his publisher into believing that he was a married man, finds it necessary to borrow the wife of his best friend in order to carry on the deception. The complications that arise lead into the usual farcical situations, some of them of the bedroom variety. Much of the comedy is nonsensical, but for the most part it manages to be mirth-provoking. At times, the dialogue is quite witty:—

Preparing to depart from their home town for a belated honeymoon in New York, Richard Foran, a bank executive, and Claudette Colbert, his wife, find their plans upset by the unexpected arrival of Don Ameche, Foran's best friend, a war correspondent en route to New York from the Orient. Ameche informs them that, while in the Orient, he had perpetrated a hoax on his sentimental publisher (Charles Dingle) by pretending that he had married, and to further the hoax he had sent Dingle a picture of Claudette as his "wife." Now he found himself in trouble because Dingle had arranged a spectacular homecoming party for both himself and his "wife." Foran, amused, persuades Claudette to pose temporarily as Ameche's spouse to help him out of his predicament. Matters become complicated when news photos of Ameche and his "bride" appear in the country's newspapers, threatening to create a scandal in Foran's home town. Lest there be a run on the bank, Foran is compelled to return home while Claudette unwillingly continues the masquerade. Thoroughly disturbed by her predicament, Claudette's distractions are multiplied when Dingle establishes Ameche and herself in a hotel bridal suite, and when he blocks her escape with Foran upon his arrival. Angered, she determines to "out-hoax" Ameche. She leads him to believe that she had fallen in love with him, causing him no end of embarrassment. He tries desperately to dissuade her, but she pursues him relentlessly. Her "infatuation" becomes so realistic that even Foran misunderstands. His ire raised, Foran calls a halt to the "affair" by knocking Ameche unconscious and by "rescuing" his wife. A note left behind by Claudette reveals to Ameche that he had been "out-hoaxed." To save face with his publisher, who tries to console him, Ameche burns the note dramatically, and assumes the martyred attitude of the husband who had been deserted by an unappreciative wife.

Bruce Manning wrote the screen play, Jack H. Skirball produced it, and Sam Wood directed it. The cast includes Grant Mitchell and others.

Adult entertainment.



**"Week-End at the Waldorf"**  
**with Ginger Rogers, Lana Turner,**  
**Van Johnson and Walter Pidgeon**  
 (MGM, no release date set; time, 128 min.)

Good entertainment for all types of audiences. That it will be an outstanding box-office attraction is a foregone conclusion, for the popularity of the players is enough to insure its success. While the credits state that the story was suggested by a play by Vicki Baum, it is apparent that it is an up-to-date version of "Grand Hotel," with alterations, of course. The story combines a series of incidents affecting the lives of different people at the hotel, with the action constantly shifting from one group of characters to another group. Some of these incidents dovetail with one another, while others have no connection whatever, yet all have been presented in so deft a fashion that one's interest in the proceedings rarely wanes. It has considerable comedy, but much of it, particularly the comedy contributed by Robert Benchley, is rather weak.

The different characters are as follows:

Ginger Rogers, as a glamorous movie star, and Walter Pidgeon, as a famous war correspondent, who fall in love after she mistakes him for a burglar and he gleefully permits her to "reform" him. This part of the picture is marked by bright sophisticated dialogue and situations.

Lana Turner, as a pert hotel stenographer, who yearned to live a life of glamour on Park Avenue, and Van Johnson, as an air force captain, who was staying at the hotel for a final week-end before undergoing an operation that may prove fatal. This part of the picture is concerned with their romance and with Lana's ultimate decision to forego her dream so that she could marry Johnson and give him courage to overcome his ailment.

Others in relatively lesser roles include Edward Arnold, as a fake oil stock promoter, whose plot to fleece the Bey of Aribajan (George Zucco) is foiled; Keenan Wynn, as a cub reporter, who, aided by Pidgeon, unmasks Arnold; Robert Benchley, as a gossip columnist and bon vivant; Phyllis Thaxter, as a worried prospective bride; Leon Ames, as Ginger's press agent; and Rosemary DeCamp, as her maid.

Xavier Cugat's Orchestra furnishes some pleasant music, highlighted by the singing of Lina Romay. Cugat and Miss Romay also take part in the action, provoking some good comedy.

The sets depicting the different lobbies and suites of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel are magnificent, and their detailed reproduction is nothing short of amazing. Life in the huge hotel is depicted vividly; the producers have worked into the plot subtly the different services and advantages it has to offer. As a matter of fact, the picture is a huge advertisement for New York's Waldorf-Astoria, but it should prove of interest to many movie-goers who have never visited the big city.

Sam and Bella Spewak wrote the screen play, Arthur Hornblow, Jr. produced it, and Robert Z. Leonard directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"The Adventures of Rusty"**  
**with Ted Donaldson**

(Columbia, no release date set; time, 67 min.)

Just a mildly entertaining program picture. It should appeal more to children than to adults. The story, which revolves around a boy and his dog, and around the boy's unwarranted resentment towards his new stepmother, is a rather hackneyed tale, and the treatment is unimaginative. As a matter of fact, the story is so thin that, to pad it out, a Nazi spy angle has been dragged in by the ear. The action is slow-moving except for the closing scenes, where a group of small children, aided by the dog, capture the spies. This may prove exciting to the youngsters, but adults will find it much too ludicrous:—

Brooding over his father's (Conrad Nagel) marriage to Margaret Lindsay, Ted Donaldson is made even more unhappy by the accidental death of his pet dog. Moreover, Ted resented his new stepmother, because of the attentions

his father paid her. Ted, on one of his lonely wanderings, finds a ferocious, Nazi-trained war dog (Ace), whose owner, a discharged war veteran, allows him to keep the animal. Unable to tame the dog, Ted takes him to Addison Richards, a psychiatrist, who advises the boy to care for the animal but to show indifference to it; Richards believed that indifference would cause the animal to become more affectionate. Meanwhile Margaret, disturbed by her failure to win Ted's love, visits Richards for advice. He tells her to give Ted the same treatment he advised for the dog. Shortly after, the dog, resenting Ted's indifference, runs away. The animal is found by two Nazi spies, hiding in the woods, who order it to kill the neighboring farmers' chickens. Ted and several of his friends form a searching party and, not only do they succeed in finding the dog, but they also capture the spies. Returning home, Ted learns that he had been the cause of a quarrel between his father and stepmother, and that she had gone away. His father's unhappiness, and the emptiness of their home, bring Ted to the realization that both needed her. He visits his stepmother and pleads with her to return home. Touched by the genuineness of his plea, Margaret wholeheartedly agrees to rejoin them.

Aubrey Wisberg wrote the screen play, Rudolph C. Flothow produced it, and Paul Burnford directed it.

**MGM POINTS THE WAY!**

(Continued from last page)

"These experienced auditors' will do their work with as little inconvenience to our customers as possible.

"In this manner, we feel we can accurately verify receipts and put auditing and checking on a more businesslike basis—less haphazard than at the present time. The verification of receipts does not imply suspicion in our business any more than it does in a bank or merchandise inventory of goods on consignment, and is just good, common, business practice. \*

"Results to date show that we have been given excellent cooperation, and that our boast that our customers as a rule justify a high credit rating was well deserved.

"Our attention has been called to some errors in judgment on the part of our field forces as to how these matters are presented. I seriously doubt if any thinking theatre owner or exhibitor leader could find anything to object to under our plan, provided it is properly presented to him and that he is not made to feel that he is being singled out or the finger of suspicion pointed at him. It should be made clear that the same rule of verification of receipts applies to all theatres, independent as well as circuits, large towns as well as small towns, dependent, of course, upon our ability to get adequate and competent help."

Elsewhere in his talk Mr. Rodgers cautions his sales force that their failure to carry out the company's policies may cause "embarrassing and unnecessary irritation" to arise, placing the company and its executives in a bad light. He admonishes them, therefore, that the carrying out of these policies "is a field responsibility that is Number One on your list of duties."

No one who knows Bill Rodgers can question his integrity or sincerity of purpose, and if the men under him will carry out his orders there should be little cause for an exhibitor to complain to the home office.

HARRISON'S REPORTS congratulates Metro for its forthright announcement of policy and for its sincere endeavor to bring about an equitable selling system. As already said, the MGM policy is not a cure-all for the ills of the industry, and there are many in exhibition who may disagree with some of its points. No one can deny, however, that it is well-intentioned. And good intentions in any sales policy constitute the most important step in any attempt to bring about a better understanding between the seller and his customers.

MGM has taken the lead. It might be well for the other distributors to follow. Now is the time, for the new selling season is about to open. In commending MGM for its announced policy, HARRISON'S REPORTS earnestly appeals to the other distributors to emulate MGM, and thus earn for themselves similar commendation.

brackets on a flat-rental basis. This will be optional at the time of negotiation. It must be understood that where flat rental in this direction is desired it is not contemplated to offer pictures in this category at bargain prices; we do not intend to price our pictures below that which we believe our top bracket justifies, neither will we ask premium prices for the privilege of playing flat rental versus percentage. We want only the proper terms. We, of course, prefer to play on a participating arrangement with this type of run, as well as all other runs, but because of conditions as they have been reported to us and because of our desire to cooperate with our customers, we will in such cases where this type of exhibitor so desires, offer all of our pictures sold in a group on a flat rental basis.

"15. As to News of the Day, short subjects and trailers, each unit must stand on its individual merit and be priced accordingly. There will be revisions upwards or down, depending upon the situation involved, and precedent is not the determining factor. Present-day conditions only should govern. Under no circumstances will we tolerate, much less sanction, the leasing of feature attractions as a condition of buying either one or all of these units. We repeat, each unit must be offered and negotiated for independent of the other and in no way made part of any negotiations for any other product. Weekly payment plans are not acceptable.

"16. Proposed new theatres are not to be given assurance of any specific availability, and we will not negotiate for representation in such theatres until they become a reality, and then only for such run and product as is then available.

"17. Every effort possible is to be made to avoid arbitration and by 'effort' we mean, as you have previously been advised, that you are to try your level best to adjudicate differences before they reach the arbitration stage. District and sales managers' aid is to be requested by branch managers where needed and, if necessary, the matter should be brought to the attention of the general sales manager.

"18. Runs or accounts are not to be changed, nor applications even signed, until after complete facts are first submitted to the general sales manager through the district and sales manager, and then such proposed changes are not to be acted upon until proper authority to do so has been received from the general sales manager.

"19. Complete support is to be given to War Activities Committees in all of their undertakings, and gratis pictures or participation in any wartime activity is not to be given except when it has the endorsement of the War Activities Committee or the home office."

In presenting to his sales cabinet the company's principles of doing business, Bill Rodgers emphasized the importance and even necessity for each MGM representative to make sure that these principles are maintained and administered in a manner that will reflect credit on the entire organization. Because of Rodgers' forthrightness and sincerity of purpose, I should have liked to reproduce in full his remarks to his sales force, but space does not permit. I will, however, give you the most salient parts of his talk.

On the matter of designations and adjustments, he said: "We pre-advertise our product and test every picture before classification in our own and other theatres. . . . On the results of record and on these results only, we classify each in the bracket determined by its individual ability to draw business. . . . Therefore, you are to designate it accordingly and only as it becomes available either to circuits or to individuals. The classification is not to be changed except with home office authority until after performance and then only if warranted by the results. Opinions regarding values are outmoded.

"There are means by which adjustments, when in order, are automatic. First, the sliding scale is in itself self-regulating. When flat rentals are involved, where we have unintentionally erred in the classification, we are not only willing but anxious to reclassify and see to it that the picture is designated where it belongs, no matter what was the original classification. The same principle applies to pictures designated at specific percentage terms and in the cases of incorrectly classified pictures, they should be rectified without request.

"Under our policy, our customers therefore need not be in the least apprehensive about accepting your designations even if they might appear to be higher than the account believes to be justified."

On the matter of pricing pictures fairly, Rodgers stated: "We advocate and expect frequent revision of our objectives

—whether up or down does not make any difference, so long as it is right. Not once a year but as often as conditions change. A sliding scale arrangement is satisfactory only when the base is fair and the development of our rental is governed by the increase in gross and operating profits where expenses are shown.

"Where flat rentals are concerned, no one is happy if they are out of proportion. This applies to us as a distributor, just the same as it does to the theatre owner. Our records are sufficiently complete to permit an intelligent application of fair prices, not once a year, but by keeping in touch with the business of our customers we should know periodically whether or not our objectives should be revised. I repeat, it is not a question of whether the revision is upwards or down, but it must be fair."

Referring to the necessity of seeing that the company's pictures are booked intelligently, Rodgers stated that "it is not only how we as a distributor desire to book, but the exhibitor's wishes as well must be considered.

"It is just as wrong for an exhibitor to dissipate a good picture as it is for the distributor to insist on so-called preferred time on a picture that does not merit that treatment.

"A distributor knows, or should, whether a picture deserves the best time. No matter what the designation, the picture should be booked where it belongs. A certain amount of freedom of booking must prevail, otherwise the theatre is handicapped in the conduct of its business—just as you are when undesirable time is offered for a picture that you know deserves better consideration.

"To my mind the same principle applies either to flat rental or percentage. Some believe we have no interest in the returns on flat rental subjects. We certainly do—and definitely so. We are interested in seeing our product played under the most favorable circumstances consistent with good judgment. I also feel we have a genuine interest in knowing what companion picture is to be used when our picture is played as part of a double-feature program. Objection should be registered—and emphatically—if you know where our meritorious product is booked with an undesirable subject. Booking is one of our most important functions . . . but there must be a measure of 'give and take.' An exhibitor who has freedom of booking and abuses the confidence must of necessity have greater restrictions in his future contracts. On the other hand, insistence on undeserved playing time will result in added controversies with what otherwise would be a most desirable account."

On the subject of checking, Mr. Rodgers had this to say: "We have gone all out in our effort to secure the confidence of our customers, and in only a few instances have we failed to convince them of our honesty of purpose. We have not given up hope and do not intend to do so, but will continue to try to cultivate those who have apparently misunderstood our desires for fair business dealings as a sign of weakness. They have apparently failed to understand our principles. We have not, nor will we, overlook them. We are of honest conviction that by far the majority of our customers are as honest as we know our organization to be and to those customers we owe an obligation that has been and will be respected. In fairness to those customers, we are definitely determined to stamp out any dishonest practices exercised by those we have reason to believe represent only a minority.

"The use of checkers has always been a tremendous problem, and under our present plan, we hope just as fast as possible, to put all checkers on a straight salary basis. These men will be assigned from New York, thus relieving our branch managers of the responsibility of assigning the men who are to check any particular engagement.

"Thus, it can follow that the group of men employed in one exchange center this week may be moved entirely as a crew to another center next week, and replaced by a new crew. We have also arranged with the Willmark Service System, a nationally known reporting service, which has personnel in 2300 cities throughout the United States available for this work. . . . That we have a separate checking organization augmented by auditors and the facilities of the Willmark Service System is not a reflection on the integrity of anyone. As provided for in our exhibitor agreements, we expect to make occasional audits of the exhibitor's books on the days he plays participating pictures. We have no desire nor do we want any information regarding business done on the product of other companies.

(Continued on inside page)



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United States .....	\$15.00
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Canada .....	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain .....	15.75
Australia, New Zealand,	
India, Europe, Asia ....	17.50
35c a Copy	

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Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, AUGUST 4, 1945

No. 31

### ELIMINATE THEATRE BOOBY TRAPS

Pete Wood, the alert secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, has included in a recent bulletin to his members a copy of an article by Robert W. Greer, president of the Columbus Projectionists Union, regarding safe and unsafe projection booths.

This paper concurs with Pete Wood that there is a lot of merit to what Mr. Greer has to say on the subject, and it believes that every thinking exhibitor should read his remarks. Mr. Greer's article, titled "Eliminate Theatre Booby Traps," follows, in part:

"The inherent right of every worker, is the right to have a safe, clean and healthful place in which to work. He owes that much to himself and to his family. Now that is exactly what I want to talk about—working conditions!

"Even today, after much progress in the motion picture industry, there is still in existence too many antiquated projection rooms and entirely too much outmoded equipment. These small, poorly ventilated booths, crowded with bulky equipment, can snuff out human life just as quickly as a well-placed bullet from a sniper's rifle or a block of TNT wired to the light switch. When I say 'Booby Traps' I mean just that. Let there be no misinterpretation of the true meaning.

"A theatre booby trap is not an implied jest. It is real and insidious, like the warning threat of a coiled rattlesnake and just as deadly. All it takes is a fire to set it off. If and when a fire might occur, which could be at any moment inasmuch as the film that is used is of a highly inflammable and explosive nature, the projectionist's life is endangered not only by the small space in which he is compelled to earn his daily bread and butter, but also by the still smaller exit through which he must escape. Of course, if he breathes enough of the chemical fumes, which wouldn't be there if a forced-draft fan had been installed in the ceiling, the size of the exit would not matter a whole lot. Either way he is a cinch for the undertaker and a swell bouquet of flowers from the theatre owner. . . .

"It is only fair to say that the majority of theatre owners realize that the projection room is the heart of their business and many have responded well by modernizing both equipment and projection rooms. It is their belief, and they view it in the cold light of dollars and cents proposition, that if the projectionist is satisfied with his working quarters and the equipment he must use is modern, the ultimate result is good screen projection which in effect adds up to satisfied customers.

"On the other hand, I am sorry to say, we still have

a few theatre owners, who for some reason or another, sadly neglect their projection rooms and the working conditions of the operators. I know of cases where the owners have spent thousands of dollars for neon signs and modernized fronts to pull in the customers and not one cent to remedy the booby trap upstairs or replace projection equipment which was all but falling apart. . . .

"I leave this question for you to ponder. Why does it have to take a catastrophe, such as a fire or a panic, to make some people stop and think? If a certain type of theatre owner would only stop to think, and then do something constructive to improve his theatre operation, there would be no necessity for the lawmakers to enact laws compelling him to make his establishment safe for the public. He seldom realizes the hardship he brings to bear on other owners, as well as himself, who try so hard to do the right thing. When his particular theatre suffers a fire, other theatres all along the line absorb the blame. For example, let me refer to the tragic Boston, night club fire. Immediately following that terrible catastrophe every night club in the country was subjected to rigid inspection. A great many were unfairly and unreasonably castigated by some sections of the press and publicity seeking individuals. . . .

"In the final analysis responsibility must always rest with management and not with the lawmakers!"

In bringing Mr. Greer's remarks to the attention of his members, Pete Wood advises them that money spent to remedy unsafe conditions is deductible as an operating expense when making up income tax returns, and he urges them to examine carefully their own situations and, if improvements are necessary, to attempt to obtain the necessary priorities on the needed materials. Pete reminds them also that a modern projection booth reduces the fire insurance premium.

All that this paper can add to the sound advice given by both Mr. Greer and Pete Wood is that it should be heeded; the thoughtful exhibitor will realize that war-time conditions have made it difficult to get replacement parts and that projection booth equipment has deteriorated generally, making the booth more susceptible to fire. The steady relaxation of war-time controls now make it easier for the theatre owner to obtain necessary replacement parts, and, in the interest of public safety, as well as his own investment, he should act at once to remove any unsafe condition. Money spent on fire preventive measures is the finest sort of economy any exhibitor can practice.

**"Over 21" with Irene Dunne,  
Alexander Knox and Charles Coburn**

(Columbia, August 23; time, 103 min.)

Good entertainment for the masses. It is a domestic comedy, based on the successful Broadway stage play of the same title, which revolves around the trials and tribulations of a 39-year-old liberal editor, who joins the army to gain first-hand knowledge of the serviceman's viewpoint on shaping the post-war world, and around the efforts of his wife, a famous novelist, to see him through his difficulties. The story is rather sketchy, but it has been directed with such skill, and is acted so agreeably and amusingly by the leading players that one's interest is held throughout. It moves at a fast pace and provokes hearty laughter frequently. Some of the situations are on the farcical side, but they are believable and keep one amused. The dialogue is sparkling, and one or two situations are suggestive, but not to the extent that they might prove offensive. On occasion, the picture strikes a serious note by conveying messages for a better post-war world, but these have been handled adroitly and do not interfere with the over-all fun. Irene Dunne, as the wife, is as beautiful as ever, and her skill as a comedienne is unsurpassed; she gives verve and life to the superficial character she portrays. Her antics in a bungalow near an army post are hilarious. Alexander Knox is exceptionally good as her husband, as is Charles Coburn as his ill-tempered publisher:—

Irene, to be near Knox, sets up housekeeping in a tiny bungalow adjoining Officers Training School in Miami. In addition to her troubles with the cramped quarters, Irene becomes concerned over Knox's fear that he might not pass the examinations, and she does her best to encourage him. One of her main difficulties was to prevent Coburn from worrying him about the condition of the *Bulletin*, which was on the decline as a result of his resignation as editor. When Coburn arrives at the bungalow and demands of Irene that she get Knox to write something for his paper to save it from bankruptcy, she persuades him to return to New York lest his presence upset Knox, promising that she would get Knox to send him a weekly editorial. Realizing that Knox could not spare the time, Irene writes the editorials herself, signing his name to them. She devotes all her time to the editorials, but informs Knox that she was writing a screen play for Pierre Watkin, a Hollywood producer. Knox passes the examinations and rushes home to tell Irene the good news. He finds Watkin in the bungalow waiting for Irene, and he chides him for overworking her on the screen play. When Watkin protests his innocence, Knox investigates and discovers the truth. Meanwhile Coburn, having learned that Knox had become an officer, gives up hope of his returning as editor and decides to discontinue publication. But Knox reveals that Irene had been writing under his name, and he induces Coburn to appoint her as the new editor until his return.

Sidney Buchman wrote the screen play from the play by Ruth Gordon. Mr. Buchman produced it, and Charles Vidor directed it. The cast includes Jeff Donnell, Loren Tindall, Lee Patrick, Phil Brown, Cora Witherspoon and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Dangerous Intruder" with Veda Ann Borg  
and Charles Arnt**

(PRC, September 21; time, 62 min.)

This psychological murder-mystery melodrama is a fair program entertainment of its type. The story is routine, and one guesses the identity of the murderer early in the proceedings; yet the action holds one's interest because of the competent performances. Moreover, the production values are good. The action is rather slow-paced; it is most exciting towards the end, where the maniacal killer attempts to dispose of the heroine by burning her alive. A mild romance is interwoven in the plot:—

Veda Ann Borg, a stranded chorus girl hitch-hiking her way back to New York, is struck down by a car driven by wealthy Charles Arnt. He takes her to his home to recover. There she meets Fay Helm, his wife, who had a mysterious

illness; Jo Ann Marlowe, his young step-daughter; Richard Powers, his brother-in-law; and John Rogers, an eccentric old man, Arnt's assistant in the study and collection of ancient ceramics. During her convalescence, Veda notices that Arnt, a mild-mannered person, took on the look of a madman whenever he pored over his antiques. When Arnt's wife dies suddenly, Veda discovers evidence indicating that Arnt had murdered her. She expresses her suspicions to Powers, with whom she had fallen in love, but the young man, loyal to his brother-in-law, becomes angry and asks her to leave. Later that night, Rogers, the assistant, informs Veda that Arnt was a madman, bent on gaining control of his dead wife's fortune to enable him to add to his collection of ceramics. Further investigation by Veda discloses that the step-daughter was to inherit the estate, and she becomes convinced that Arnt planned to take the child's life. Arnt, aware that Veda had found him out, murders his assistant for speaking to her, then lures her to a lonely road where he knocks her unconscious, and places her in a car together with the body of the assistant. He then sets fire to the car. Meanwhile, Powers, disturbed by what Veda had told him, had learned that her suspicions were well founded. He returns to the estate in time to save Veda's life. Arnt, making a hasty getaway, is killed when his car overturns.

Martin M. Goldsmith wrote the screen play, Martin Mooney produced it, and Vernon Keays directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Radio Stars on Parade" with  
Frances Langford, Alan Carney  
and Wally Brown**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 69 min.)

This program comedy with music may go over in small-town and neighborhood theatres where the family trade is not too exacting in their demands; but discriminating audiences will probably find the whole thing pretty tiresome. It may, however, draw fairly well at the box-office because of the popularity of the radio personalities, particularly the "Truth and Consequences" radio show, with which comedians Alan Carney and Wally Brown become tangled up in the course of the action. Other radio performers in the cast include Skinnay Ennis and his band, Don Wilson, Tony Romano, the Town Criers, the Cappy Barra Boys, and Rufe Davis—all appear briefly in specialty numbers that are not particularly outstanding, and some of them take small parts in the action. The best that can be said for the picture is that the action is fast-moving; also that on one or two occasions Carney and Brown manage to provoke hearty laughter by their antics. The story is silly, the gags are old, and the action, which borders on the slapstick, is more to the taste of juveniles than of adults. Frances Langford is very pleasant:—

To avoid the unwanted attentions of Sheldon Leonard, a Chicago night-club owner, Frances, his star singer, leaves for Hollywood to seek a radio job through Ray Walker, an agent. Meanwhile Walker, threatened by a gambler seeking to collect a \$2000 debt, prepares to run away to Mexico. He bumps into Brown and Carney, a comedy team seeking work, and tells them to take charge of his office until he returns. Arriving at Walker's office, Frances is signed by Carney and Brown, who, faking an acquaintance with Skinnay Ennis, promise her an audition with his band. On the following day, Brown, through a ruse, obtains the audition and secures a spot for Frances on Ennis' radio program. Meanwhile, at the office, Carney accepts \$2000 from Leonard, who had followed Frances, in return for his promise to cancel the audition. The gambler, who was after Walker, comes into the office and takes the money away from Carney. The boys soon find themselves deep in trouble; unable either to cancel Frances' contract with Ennis or to return Sheldon's money, they become involved in a wild chase through different studios at the broadcasting station until they are finally caught by the gangsters. They are saved, however, by the timely arrival of the police, who had learned that Sheldon had arrived in town.

Robert E. Kent and Monte Brice wrote the screen play, Ben Stoloff produced it, and Leslie Goodwins directed it.



### **"Johnny Angel" with George Raft, Claire Trevor and Signe Hasso**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 79 min.)

In spite of the fact that it lacks a clearly developed plot, this mystery melodrama possesses enough intrigue and sinister atmosphere to satisfy those who enjoy this type of entertainment. Suspense is sustained fairly well throughout as George Raft, as a young sea captain, seeks to solve the mystery of his father's ship, which had been found adrift in the Gulf of Mexico, with no one aboard and with evidence indicating that the crew, including his father, had been murdered. The manner in which Raft follows up the different clues and pieces them together provides considerable excitement, particularly since he is often called upon to use his fists. His is a forceful role, the sort his fans will like. The romantic interest plays an important part in the action, with Raft falling in love with Signe Hasso, whom he at first suspects, while he feigns attentiveness to Claire Trevor, his employer's wife, who was a key figure in the riddle involving his father's death:—

After finding his father's ship adrift, Raft tries to enlist the aid of Marvin Miller, his employer, to solve the mystery. But Miller, too busy trying to keep his wayward wife (Claire Trevor) away from Lowell Gilmore, a night-club owner, shows indifference to Raft's request. Raft embarks on an investigation of his own and finds evidence that a woman had been aboard the ship until she had docked. With the aid of Hoagy Carmichael, a philosophical taxi-driver, Raft traces the woman to a cheap hotel and, after doggedly pursuing her through a series of adventures, wins her confidence and learns that her father, an agent of the Free French in Casablanca, had been murdered shortly after delivering five million dollars in gold aboard the ship of Raft's father. She had secured passage aboard the ship to see that the gold was delivered to the proper quarters, but, when the ship neared New Orleans, Raft's father and the crew had been murdered during a mutiny led by a mysterious stowaway, who had transferred the gold to a motor launch. She had survived the ordeal, hiding in a life boat. Piecing together the clues given him by Signe, Raft learns that Gilmore owned the launch, and finds reason to suspect Claire of complicity in the crime. He deliberately makes love to her, winning her confidence, and she leads him through another series of adventures that culminate in his learning that Miller, his employer, was the mysterious stowaway who had murdered his father.

Steve Fisher wrote the screen play, based upon "Mr. Angel Comes Aboard" by Charles Gordon Booth. William L. Pereira produced it, and Edwin L. Marin directed it. Jack J. Gross was executive producer. The cast includes Margaret Wyckler, J. Farrell Macdonald and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Dangerous Partners" with James Craig and Signe Hasso**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 78 min.)

A fairly good mystery melodrama, of program grade, revolving around an unscrupulous adventuress and a none-too-ethical lawyer, who joins forces in an attempt to learn the secret of four wills, each of which leaves one million dollars to a mysterious stranger. The picture holds one's interest from start to finish, but the theme, is somewhat demoralizing since both the hero and the heroine work a crooked game to get their hands on the money, even double-crossing one another. The unpleasantness, however, is softened by the fact that in the end they become regenerated and expose the beneficiary of the wills as a Nazi spy. There is considerable suspense in some of the situations, particularly the one where the spy kidnaps the adventurous pair and beats them in a futile attempt to learn where they had hidden one million dollars in bonds. Although their roles are unsympathetic, Signe Hasso and James Craig give good performances:—

Slightly injured when their plane crashes on a flight from

Mexico to the United States, Signe Hasso and John Warburton, her husband, rifle the brief case of Edmund Gwenn, an unconscious passenger, and discover copies of four wills, each leaving a million dollars to Gwenn. They sense something illegal about the wills and memorize the names and addresses of the testators, hoping to enrich themselves in some way. Meanwhile in Cleveland, Warner Anderson, one of the testators, asks James Craig, an unscrupulous attorney, to change his will, naming his night-club sweetheart as the beneficiary instead of Gwenn. Before he can sign the will, however, Anderson is murdered. Gwenn, who had arrived in town on the previous night, inherits a million dollars in bonds. Craig, suspicious of Gwenn, boards a train taking Gwenn to New York. Aboard the train also were Signe and Warburton, who, too, were trailing Gwenn. Craig strikes up an acquaintance with Signe, and both notice Gwenn leave the train hurriedly. They investigate and find her husband murdered in Gwenn's compartment. Signe and Craig join forces with the intention of beating Gwenn to the other three testators. In New York, Craig visits Felix Bressart, another of the testators, and by posing as Gwenn induces him to hand over a million dollars in securities. The pair next go to Bedford's Island to employ the same scheme on Mabel Paige, only to find that they had walked into a trap planned by Gwenn. When they refuse to reveal where they hid the bonds, Gwenn permits them to escape, hoping that they will lead him to the securities. Meanwhile Craig had discovered that Gwenn was a Nazi spy, and he manages to leave a clue for the police before Gwenn's henchmen kidnap both Signe and himself. Both, having decided to reform, refuse to tell where they had hidden the bonds, and they withstand a brutal beating long enough to allow the police time to arrive and capture the gang.

Marion Parsonnet wrote the screen play, Arthur L. Freed produced it, and Edward L. Cahn directed it. The cast includes Henry O'Neill, Grant Withers and others.

Adult entertainment.

### **"Easy to Look At" with Gloria Jean and Kirby Grant**

(Universal, August 10; time, 64 min.)

Just another program picture, with some music, undistinguished either in direction or acting, as well as in story. At best, it deserves no better than lower-half billing on a mid-week double bill. The trite story is developed in so obvious a way that one becomes bored by the time the picture is half finished. Moreover, the pace is leisurely. The musical interludes, particularly Gloria Jean's singing, are pleasant, and they provide the most entertaining moments, but they are not strong enough to carry the picture. The production values are modest:—

Seeking a position as a fashion designer, Gloria, an art student, arrives in New York and accepts a job as stock clerk in a dressmaking establishment owned by Kirby Grant. She becomes friendly with J. Edward Bromberg, the night watchman, a former designer, and together they create gowns after hours. When Eric Blore, a Broadway producer, comes to inspect some gowns for his star, he selects one that had been changed by Gloria from a design by George Dolenz, the head designer. Furious, Dolenz threatens to quit, but Bromberg, to save Gloria, takes the blame. Grant, however, likes the gown so well that he makes Bromberg co-designer in the shop. Realizing that his views were old-fashioned, Bromberg permits Gloria to do his work secretly. Meanwhile Grant falls in love with her. Complications arise when Gloria innocently sells one of her own sketches to one of Grant's competitors. Grant accuses her of stealing the firm's design, and discharges her. Completely frustrated, Gloria decides to return home, but Grant, through Bromberg, learns the truth and begs her forgiveness.

Henry Blankfort wrote the screen play and produced it, and Ford Beebe directed it. The cast includes the Delta Rhythm Boys, Mildred Law, Leon Belasco and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Captain Kidd" with Charles Laughton and Randolph Scott**

(United Artists, August 24; time, 88 min.)

A fairly entertaining pirate melodrama. The performances are superior to the story values, and are the main reason for one's interest in the picture. Otherwise, it is a rather loosely written tale of piratical machinations during the reign of Great Britain's William III (1688-1702), when swash-buckling buccaneers and freebooters roamed the Spanish Main, plundering ships bound to and from India. While it has several thrilling sequences, it lacks for the most part the excitement one expects to find in pictures of this type. Charles Laughton, as "Captain Kidd," is very good, although his characterization is far from sympathetic; throughout he is shown as a cruel, ruthless scoundrel, without one redeeming feature. The romance between Barbara Britton, the only woman in the cast, and Randolph Scott, is pleasant, but it is of no importance:—

Despite Captain Kidd's reputation for piracy, the King (Henry Daniell) commissions him to meet a treasure ship returning from India and to escort it through pirate-infested waters. Kidd, who hoped that the King would make him a nobleman, recruits most of his crew from prisoners in Newgate Prison, among them Adam Mercy (Randolph Scott), deposed son of a disgraced peer, who was believed to have turned pirate against the King. Actually, Mercy's father had been murdered by Kidd and his henchmen (John Carradine, Gilbert Roland, John Qualen, and Sheldon Leonard), who had blackened his name and had stolen the King's treasures, burying it on a tropical island. Kidd, having determined to keep the treasure for himself, lays plans to murder his nefarious henchmen and succeeds in ridding himself of Qualen and Leonard. Meeting the treasure-laden galleon he had been commissioned to escort, Kidd, through a ruse, transfers the treasures aboard his ship, blows up the galleon, and kidnaps Lady Anne (Barbara Britton) a British noblewoman, whose father, the King's ambassador to India, he kills. Meanwhile Mercy discovers proof that Kidd had murdered his father and had buried the treasure. Realizing that he would never leave the ship alive, Mercy, after killing Roland who had attempted to molest Lady Anne, escapes from the ship with her. Kidd shells their small boat and believes that both had perished. He then murders Carradine, the last of his henchmen, and returns to England expecting to be received by the King with great honor. He finds instead that Mercy and Lady Anne had reached England safely, and had given the King proof of his villainy. The King sends him to the gallows.

Norman Reilly Raine wrote the screen play, Benedict Bogeaus produced it, and Rowland V. Lee directed it. The cast includes Reginald Owen and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Mama Loves Papa" with Leon Errol**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 60 min.)

A mediocre program slapstick comedy. It is a remake, having first been produced by Paramount in 1933, with Charles Ruggles and Mary Boland as the stars. Unlike the original production, which was extremely amusing, this one offers such a hodge-podge of nonsense that one will indeed have to be an ardent follower of Leon Errol in order to enjoy it; discriminating patrons will probably find it tiresome, for the proceedings are silly to the point of annoyance, and the characters are presented in exaggerated style. Here and there the situations provide some chuckles, but for the most part the comedy is weak. Summed up, the picture leaves one with the impression that it is two-reel material stretched to feature length:—

Elisabeth Risdon, happily married for twenty years to Leon Errol, a timid office worker, becomes inspired when she attends a lecture on "how to be the woman behind your man." She insists that Errol demand a raise from his employer (Emory Parnell), and compels him to wear formal morning clothes to the office. When he arrives for work, the office force believe that he had come from a funeral, and his employer insists that he go home for the day. He wanders

into the park, where he is mistaken for the Park Commissioner and is hurried to a platform to unveil a statue. He has his picture taken with Charlotte Wynters, wife of the town's political boss (Paul Harvey), a big manufacturer of playground equipment. When the mistake is found out, Harvey, deciding that Errol was not too bright, and that he would be easy to control, arranges for his appointment as Park Commissioner. Several weeks later, Errol and his proud wife attend a reception at Harvey's home, where the political boss was trying to induce Charles Halton, a philanthropist, to buy playground equipment for recreation centers he planned to build across the country. Errol, tasting champagne for the first time, becomes tipsy; his wife leaves him for carrying on with Harvey's wife, and Harvey discharges him as commissioner when he truthfully informs the philanthropist that Harvey's playground equipment was inferior. Errol returns home dejected, only to find his wife willing to forgive him, and his former employer waiting to offer him a promotion.

Charles Roberts and Monte Brice wrote the screen play, Ben Stoloff produced it, a Frank Strayer directed it. The cast includes Lawrence Tierney and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"George White's Scandals" with Joan Davis, Jack Haley and Martha Holliday**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 95 min.)

The best that can be said for this comedy with music is that the title may insure for it a better-than-average success at the box-office. As entertainment, it is only fair, at times becoming tedious. The fault lies in the story, which is silly and commonplace, and in the treatment, which is unimaginative. The picture does nothing to further the career of Joan Davis, for, although she is a good comedienne, she cannot overcome the inept material. For the most part, the comedy is forced, much of it in slapstick style. Musically, the picture is fairly good. The songs and production numbers are lively, and Gene Krupa's "swing" music and Ethel Smith's organ playing should serve to attract the younger set. Martha Holliday, a pleasing and stunning personality, is outstanding in several dance numbers, and she can act well, too:—

At a reunion of the cast of George White's 1919 Scandals, Joan Davis announces her engagement to Jack Haley, star comedian of the 1945 Scandals, but confesses that Haley's spinster sister (Margaret Hamilton) was trying to break up their romance. Martha Holliday joins the party and introduces herself as the daughter of a chorine in the 1919 show, who had married a British diplomat stationed in Washington. Joan invites her to a rehearsal. Arriving at the theatre on the following day, Martha is mistaken for a chorus girl by Philip Terry, the dance director. Martha, amused, decides to carry on the deception, and Joan promises to keep her secret from both Terry and her family. George White and Terry soon discover that Martha was an accomplished ballerina. They give her a featured spot in the show, much to the annoyance of Bettejane Greer, another dancer. Meanwhile Joan and Haley have their troubles because of his sister's tantrums. A romance blossoms between Martha and Terry, but it soon goes on the rocks when Bettejane reveals Martha's identity to Terry, leading him to believe that she had been amusing herself with him. They quarrel, and Martha fails to appear on opening night. With the show half over, Haley, circulating amongst the audience in a mind reading act with Joan, discovers Martha watching the show. He spirits her backstage, where she effects a reconciliation with Terry in time to appear in her ballet number. Her brilliant performance draws cheers from the audience, and it all ends with Terry and Martha in each other's arms, and with the spinster sister giving Joan and Haley her blessing.

Hugh Wedlock, Howard Snyder, Parke Levy, and Howard Green wrote the screen play, George White produced it, and Felix E. Feist directed it. Jack J. Gross and Nat Holt were executive producers. The cast includes Glenn Tryon, Rose Murphy, Fritz Feld, Beverly Wills and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



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Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1945

No. 32

### CONCEALED ADVERTISING IN FEATURE PICTURES

The article that follows should interest every exhibitor. It has appeared in the August 5 Sunday issue of the *Detroit News*.

Mr. Heffernan has been the manager of the Hollywood office of the *Detroit News* for years, and his daily column is syndicated by the North American Newspaper Alliance.

I happen to know Mr. Heffernan personally and I consider him as a great and accurate reporter. I can vouch for the accuracy of every statement he makes in this revealing article:

#### MOVIE-AD PLANTING

By HAROLD HEFFERNAN

Released by the NANA

Hollywood, Aug. 5.—In the currently successful movie, "The Great John L.," based on the life of the most colorful of all prizefighters, John L. Sullivan, in a scene where Greg McClure, impersonating John L., walks into a saloon, thumps loudly on the bar and demands that everyone have a drink on him.

"Give me a double-bourbon," demands John L.

The boys all raise glasses, toast their idol and douse it down.

John L. brushes a hand across his lips, picks up his empty glass and hurls it against the bar mirror, breaking it to smithereens.

"Drink has been my downfall!" ejaculates the great man. And with that confession he staggers out of the joint.

"When you see 'The Great John L.' you will not see this sequence—and that is primarily because it offended the business principles of a man named Walter E. Kline.

Kline represents the American Bourbon Association, along with a couple of hundred additional clients, and it is his job to see that his customers get a fair break in pictures. The highest-salaried advertising lobbyist in the world, he saves movie producers hundreds of thousands of dollars annually by supplying them props and ready-made sets. And at no cost to them. He does it all on speculation, hoping that a kindly studio prop man or director will give one of his products an ad break on the screen.

Getting back to "The Great John L." and bourbon whiskey, the latter is Kline's chief interest as a lobbyist. That is why he almost collapsed when, after planting the tieup in that barroom scene, he discovered that John L., after tossing off the bourbon, publicly attributed his downfall to drink.

"I worked for weeks getting them to mention bourbon when they made that scene," Kline recalled, "but I worked ten times harder getting the thing cut out when I discovered what actually went on. I understand it is no longer in the picture. That is good."

When Kline first took over the bourbon movie account ten years ago, he was concerned mainly with getting screen characters to stop asking so consistently for "Scotch and

soda" in the cocktail sequences. He succeeded in this by talking seriously to writers and directors and, in some instances, by demonstrating to them that American bourbon is pretty smooth stuff.

Nowadays, with bourbon well established and not exactly a drug on the market, Kline's efforts are pointed toward dignifying it. If a character asks for bourbon in a movie, he must be a first-rate sort of a chap, not a bum, mind you. Pictures carrying drinking scenes followed by reckless driving and accidents, or juvenile delinquency movies are now Kline's special concern. In these instances he goes to the writers and asks them not to allow tawdry characters to mention bourbon by name. If the riff-raffs want to call for "Scotch" it is certainly okay by Kline and the American bourbon folks.

One of the big hush-hush jobs of recent months was in connection with "The Lost Weekend." The story, as you probably know, is from a best-seller based on the deliriums of an alcoholic. Paramount was playing no favorites in having its leading man, Ray Milland, drink everything in the book. Somehow or other Kline got hold of a script and discovered that Milland was mainly devoted to bourbon and said so in his dialog altogether too often. He went right to work on that one and the bourbon interests are happy with the result.

If it's an ad plug you want on the screen, there's better than an even chance that Kline can get the break. His clients include steamship lines, railways, automobiles, public parks, airplanes, radio manufacturers, watchmakers, soft drinks, electric shavers, typewriters, business office files, hats, produce—almost any commodity you can name.

This week Kline's trucks were loaded with empty crates destined for the Universal lot, where a movie called "Once Upon a Dream" was staging a spectacular New York commission market sequence. Kline provided all the produce, with empty crates in the background. His reward, he hopes, will be two-fold—one, a closeup—showing the end of a crate with a blue goose stenciled upon it (the trade mark of an orange he exploits) and a line of dialog where one dealer mentions how well his calavos are selling. The latter item is a California-grown fruit which Kline would like to get eastern buyers to promote.

When a character looks at his wrist watch, and you get a peak at the famous trade mark, chances are Kline has had his hand in it. Same is true when Fred Allen uses an electric shaver on his face in "It's in the Bag." You see the shaver and you know Fred is enjoying it because he sings as it whirs.

Kline is soft-pedaling most of his travel accounts these days and for obvious reasons. He no longer asks set designers to hang pretty pictures of Yosemite Park on the walls of office buildings. His mockup airplane (a sort of shell of the real thing) also stands around idly in his big sound stage-like storehouse-office, situated within easy B-coupon reach of all the studios.

And he refuses to worry over the fact that feature pictures show fewer station arrival and departure scenes. These called

(Continued on last page)

**"Lady on a Train" with Deanna Durbin**  
(Universal, August 24; time, 93 min.)

This mixture of murder mystery, melodrama, and comedy, will have to depend on Deanna Durbin's popularity, for, as entertainment, it is only fair. The story is thin and unbelievable, and the players struggle with the poor material. One wonders why Universal has wasted the talents of Miss Durbin, its most valuable star, on a story that is so far-fetched and at times ridiculous. Those who are not too concerned about the credibility of a plot may find some of the situations quite amusing. Three songs sung by Miss Durbin give the picture its most entertaining moments. As a matter of fact, more accent on the music and less on the melodramatics would have helped matters considerably. To the picture's credit are the swift action and the good production values:—

As her train stops on the elevated tracks leading into New York's 125th Street station, Deanna Durbin, a wealthy California debutante with a penchant for reading mystery stories, sees a murder committed in a building facing the tracks but does not see the murderer's face. Deanna eludes Edward Everett Horton, her father's New York representative, who had been assigned to guard her, and rushes to the police to report the crime. When the police dismiss her as a crank, Deanna seeks the aid of David Bruce, her favorite mystery book author. Bruce, fearing the wrath of Patricia Morison, his jealous fiancée, puts Deanna out of his apartment. She follows Bruce and Patricia to a movie theatre, where she sees a newsreel shot reporting the death of a wealthy shipbuilder on his Long Island estate, and recognizes the man as the one whom she had seen murdered. After creating a disturbance in an unsuccessful attempt to get Bruce to accompany her, Deanna goes to the estate to investigate. There, the dead man's relatives and associates, gathered for the reading of the will, mistake her for Marie Plamer, a night-club singer, to whom the victim had left the bulk of his estate. Searching for clues, Deanna finds a pair of bloodstained slippers and manages to get them out of the house. Finding it necessary to carry on the deception in order to gain more evidence, Deanna goes to the night-club where she locks Marie in a closet and takes her place as the club's singer. Meanwhile the relatives and other sundry characters, some of them bent on regaining the slippers, arrive at the club. Bruce, who had finally become intrigued by the mystery, joins the party. Deanna soon finds herself embroiled in a series of strange adventures that result in two additional murders before she, aided by Bruce, finally unmasks the killer as Ralph Bellamy, one of the victim's nephews. It all ends with Deanna and Bruce embarking on a honeymoon.

Edmund Beloin and Robert O'Brien wrote the screen play, Felix Jackson produced it, and Charles David directed it. The cast includes Dan Duryea, George Coulouris, Allen Jenkins, Elizabeth Patterson, Samuel S. Hinds and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Pride of the Marines" with John Garfield and Eleanor Parker**

(Warner Bros., September 1; time, 119 min.)

This is a sensitive and at times forceful dramatization of the life of Marine-hero Al Schmid, whose exploits on Guadalcanal were given wide publicity earlier in the war. Since the theme deals with war and with the rehabilitation of blinded and maimed ser-

vicemen, its chances at the box-office will depend on whether or not your patrons are in the mood for this type of entertainment. Aside from its box-office potentiality, the story is of the sort that stirs one's emotions deeply, particularly in the sequences that deal with the hero's embitterment at finding himself handicapped by blindness, and with his determination to give up his sweetheart lest she become his "seeing-eye dog." Worked into the story are rather lengthy discourses by hospitalized servicemen on such subjects as the G.I. Bill of Rights, racial intolerance, post-war employment, and other matters concerned with the future of returning fighting men. Much of what they say on these subjects is meaningful, but the discourses are so long drawn out that they interrupt the flow of the story, tending to tire one. John Garfield, as Schmid, gives an effective portrayal. Eleanor Parker, as his sweetheart, is very good, winning one's sympathy by her endeavors to give him courage to face the future, and to convince him that his handicap need not interfere with their love. Dane Clark, as Garfield's buddy, provides some good comedy relief:—

Garfield, a fun-loving young man with an aversion for women, falls in love with Eleanor just prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor. He enlists in the Marines and, on Guadalcanal, distinguishes himself in action by exterminating more than two hundred Japs until blinded by an enemy grenade. Sent to a hospital in San Diego, Garfield, after an operation, fails to regain his sight. He becomes embittered and asks Rosemary DeCamp, a Red Cross nurse, to write to Eleanor, breaking their engagement but to tell her nothing of his blindness. Eleanor, disturbed, telephones Garfield but he refuses to speak to her. Rosemary tells her the truth. Shortly after, Garfield, against his wishes, is sent home to Philadelphia where he was to be awarded the Navy Cross. He is accompanied on the trip by Dane Clark, his buddy, who finds Eleanor at the station waiting for them. With Clark's cooperation, she poses as a nurse and takes Garfield home with her. He soon discovers the ruse and demands that she take him to a hospital. Despite his insistence that she forget him, Eleanor finally wins him over, convincing him that she needed him as much as he needed her.

Albert Maltz wrote the screen play, Jerry Wald produced it, and Delmer Daves directed it. The cast includes John Ridgely, Ann Doran, Ann Todd and others.

**"The Shanghai Cobra" with Sidney Toler**

(Monogram, October 1; time, 63 min.)

Differing little in theme or in treatment from the other pictures in the series, this latest "Charlie Chan" murder mystery melodrama should get by as a supporting feature wherever the series is liked. Sidney Toler, as the Chinese detective, dominates the proceedings, solving the crime in a manner that is hardly plausible, but his deductions will probably be found acceptable by the series' followers. It has a fair share of suspense, and considerable comedy is provoked by the well-intentioned but blundering interference of Benson Song, as "Chan's" son, and of Manton Moreland, as his chauffeur, who endeavor to help him solve the mystery:—

Because of his experience with a similar case in Shanghai, Sidney Toler is asked by the police to investigate the poison murders of three employees of the Sixth National Bank, where a priceless stock of radium had been stored by the Government. Toler visits the scene of the last murder, where he learns



from the operator of a "television juke-box" that James Cardwell, a private detective, and Joan Barclay, secretary to Roy Gordon, the bank's president, were present at the time of the murder but had escaped detection by the police. A fourth murder, that of a police investigator posing as a bank porter, convinces Toler that a gang of thieves were bent on stealing the radium. Other clues lead him to suspect not only Cardwell and Joan, but also Arthur Loft, the bank's vice-president, and Addison Richards, a bank guard. Through the bungling interference of his son and his colored chauffeur, Toler finds himself on the trail of James Flavin, a chemical engineer, who plotted to blow open the bank's vaults. To make Flavin reveal his hand, Toler announces that the radium would be removed from the bank on the following day. Flavin and his henchmen (Joe Devlin and Gene Stutenroth) decide to move quickly. There follows a series of adventures in the sewage system passageways beneath the bank, in which Toler and his assistants almost lose their lives before they are rescued by the police, who also capture the criminals. Toler, positive that Flavin was employed by someone higher up, tricks the bank's vice-president into revealing that he was the brains behind the plot to steal the radium.

George Callahan and George Wallace Sayre wrote the screen play, James J. Burkett produced it, and Phil Karlson directed it. Unobjectionable morally.

**"The Strange Affair of Uncle Harry"  
with George Sanders, Ella Raines  
and Geraldine Fitzgerald**

(Universal, August 17; time, 80 min.)

This is a taut, effective melodrama, but the surprise ending, in which it is shown that the difficulties George Sanders had gotten himself into had been a dream, will come as a disappointment to most spectators, for it is contrived and false; there is nothing in the action to indicate that he had fallen asleep. Adapted from the Broadway play, "Uncle Harry," the story revolves around a placid, middle-aged man, who is driven to murder when his marriage plans are interfered with by a fanatical spinster sister. The action is slow, but the story holds one's attention throughout because of the interesting developments. The performances are particularly good, and the direction is skillful, but the story is unpleasant:—

George Sanders, a pattern designer in a New England textile mill, lives a cloistered existence with his two sisters, Geraldine Fitzgerald, a deliberate invalid, and Moyna Maggill, a widow. When Sanders falls in love with Ella Raines, his firm's New York fashion designer, Geraldine, fanatically devoted to him, cannot conceal her unnatural jealousy; she determines to prevent his marriage to Ella. With crafty guile and tricks, she succeeds in prolonging the engagement until Ella, angered at her trickery and at her influence over Sanders, demands that he marry her immediately and leave town. Geraldine, feigning serious illness, influences him to deny Ella's demands. Ella returns to New York, and some weeks later Sanders learns that she planned to wed their employer. Realizing that Geraldine's possessiveness had ruined his happiness, Sanders becomes obsessed with an overwhelming desire to kill her. One night he drops some poison in her cup of cocoa, but through a strange series of circumstances his widowed sister drinks the poisoned cup. Because of Geraldine's constant quarreling with her sister, a fact known to many people, she is charged with the murder and sentenced to death. Sanders,

unable to bear the strain, writes a confession and takes it to the warden on the day of the execution. The warden refuses to believe him, and Geraldine, who was aware of Sanders' guilt, has her revenge on him by repudiating the confession so that he might live with a maddening conscience for the rest of his life. Sanders awakes to find that both his sisters are alive, and that he had been having a horrible dream. Ella, unable to deny her love for him, returns to his side for a happy ending.

Stephen Longstreet wrote the screen play from the play by Thomas Job, Joan Harrison produced it, and Robert Siodmak directed it. It is a Charles K. Feldman production. The cast includes Sara Allgood, Samuel S. Hinds, Harry Von Zell and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Kiss and Tell" with Shirley Temple**

(Columbia, September; time, 90 min.)

Adapted from the Broadway stage play of the same title, "Kiss and Tell" is a pretty good comedy-farce, more suitable for adults than for children and adolescents. The story deals with the complications a 'teen-aged girl gets herself into when, to keep secret the marriage of her brother to her girl-friend, she allows her family to believe that she was going to have a baby. Some of the situations are highly hilarious, and the dialogue in spots is extremely witty. One is kept laughing almost throughout. The first part of the picture is rather slow, but it gathers speed as it goes along. Shirley Temple, as the "wayward" girl, does fairly well, but top acting honors go to Walter Abel for his exaggerated but comical portrayal of her excitable father. Darryl Hickman, too, as a fresh kid-brother, provides some choice comedy, as does Jerome Courtland, as the "unwitting" father of Shirley's "child." The production values are moderate, the action being confined to a few sets:—

Shirley Temple and her chum, Virginia Welles, sell kisses at a Red Cross bazaar, thereby causing a feud between their families, who accuse each other of rearing the girls improperly. Because of the feud, Shirley's soldier-brother, Scott Elliott, home on leave, finds it difficult to romance with Virginia. He marries her secretly. Shirley learns of the marriage but promises under oath to keep it a secret. Some months later, Virginia discovers that she was going to become a mother. Matters become complicated when a gossipy neighbor sees Shirley leaving an obstetrician's office after accompanying Virginia there. The news reaches Shirley's parents (Katherine Alexander and Walter Abel), who link it with a clandestine visit Shirley had with a soldier (Scott McKay). Lest she explain and reveal her brother's secret marriage, Shirley admits pregnancy and names as the "father" of her child Jerome Courtland, a gawky 'teen-aged suitor, who lived next door. Shirley easily induces him to make no denial. Outraged, the families of both youngsters arrange for their marriage, much to Jerome's delight and Shirley's distress. Meanwhile a telegram sent to Virginia by Elliott reveals to Virginia's parents that he was her husband and that she, not Shirley, was expecting a baby. All rush over to Shirley's home where they halt her marriage to Jerome in the nick of time. The feud between both families dies in a blaze of celebration.

F. Hugh Herbert adapted the screenplay from his own play, Sol C. Siegel produced it, and Richard Wallace directed it. The cast includes Robert Benchley, Porter Hall, Edna Holland, Tom Tully and others.

for him to arrange with the Santa Fe railway to show the famous Super-Chief pulling in elegantly while cameras ground against it for part of the plot.

This recalls his most embarrassing experience as a movie ad plugger. He was shooting the Chief, disgorging its handsome screen characters that day when, on an adjoining track the Union Pacific Streamliner, also a pretty good train, steamed majestically by, stealing the spotlight.

Kline thinks movie plugging is great because it swoops down on the prospective buyer when he's relaxed and unsuspecting. And he refuses to worry about increasing complaints by exhibitors that producers should put a stop to such advertising.

"I pay nothing to the producers," Kline said. "On the other hand I save them money by dressing their sets and loaning them the use of standard items and props they otherwise would have difficulty in obtaining quickly."

Kline is performing one mission gratis. He is conducting a crusade to stamp out use of the word "whiskey" in all dialog.

"It antagonizes the prohibition folks and arouses a certain disgust among other people," he said. "It's much more dignified to use the word 'drink,' he insists.

Or, of course, he could have meant bourbon.

## A LITTLE MORE FREEDOM IN EXHIBITION

Monopolistic practices in the motion picture industry were dealt another bitter blow last week when the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit filed a unanimous opinion in favor of the William Goldman Theatres, Inc., of Philadelphia, holding that the Warner Brothers Theatre Circuit and the eight major distributors were guilty of violating the anti-trust laws.

The opinion, written by District Judge Paul Leahy and concurred in by Presiding Judge John J. Parker of the Fourth Circuit, and by Presiding Judge John Biggs, Jr., of the Third Circuit, reversed the findings of U. S. District Judge William H. Kirkpatrick, who, in April 1944, had ruled that the defendants were not in violation of the anti-trust statutes.

What makes this decision significant, among other things, is the fact that it does away with the possibility of Judge Kirkpatrick's decision endangering, or even crippling, the Government's prosecution of the different anti-trust suits now pending, involving the motion picture industry. As a matter of fact, it was because of this danger that the Government, represented by Robert L. Wright, special assistant to the U. S. Attorney-General, intervened in the suit as a friend of the Court at the time Goldman filed his appeal.

In order that you may understand the decision, I am reproducing the following essential facts about the case, together with appropriate comment, which appeared in an August 4 bulletin issued by Abram F. Myers, general counsel of Allied States Association:

"... William Goldman, thoroughly experienced in the motion picture business, leased for 10 years the Erlanger Theatre, one of the finest in Philadelphia. At that time Warner Bros. operated all the first-runs in that city—Stan-ton, Stanley, Aldine, Earle, Boyd and Fox. Warner Bros., therefore, had a local monopoly of first-run theatres and first-class first-run product. Goldman tried to license pictures on first-run but was refused by all major distributors. Because of the favorable terms of his lease he was able to offer higher film rentals than Warner Bros. was paying, but he still was refused. In 1942 Warner Bros. reopened the Mastbaum Theatre, which had been closed for seven years, and began to operate it as a first-run house. The distributors had first-run pictures for the Mastbaum, but still refused to sell to the Erlanger.

"Goldman filed suit against the distributors and the Warner Bros. Circuit charging violation of the Sherman Act and asking for injunctive relief and damages. The defendants were cocky—they did not offer any defense—and the case was submitted on the plaintiff's *prima facie* evidence. District Judge Kirkpatrick dismissed Goldman's complaint in an opinion that did violence to every principle of anti-trust law, as revealed by an analysis made by the General Counsel of Allied. Goldman appealed. The Department of Justice, sensing that an affirmation of Judge Kirkpatrick's decision might have an adverse effect on pending cases against the Big Eight and the Schine and Griffith Circuits, filed a brief as *amicus curia* [ED. NOTE: friend of the court] and Mr. Wright made an oral argument.

"The Circuit Court of Appeals in reversing Judge Kirkpatrick, concluded that Goldman should have both injunctive relief and damages and remanded the case for the ascertainment of damages and entry of an appropriate judgment.

"The distributors relied on their time-worn contention that a private trader is 'free to exercise his own independent discretion as to the parties with whom he will deal.' The Court agreed that Goldman, as a mere lessee of a theatre, has no right to demand defendants' products. But said the Court, 'plaintiff does have the right to have its business protected if there is concert of action directed at plaintiff, which results in his removal from competition.' Defendants, of course, renewed their hoary argument that the mere fact that they all sold to the circuit and would not sell to the independent did not constitute proof of combination or conspiracy. Apparently they would suspect nothing wrong if they saw eight horses run a dead heat. The Court, however, concluded that the defendants acted in concert in excluding the plaintiff and quoting from the Supreme Court in the Interstate Circuit Case, the Court added, 'it is elementary that an unlawful conspiracy may be and often is formed without simultaneous action or agreement on the part of the conspirators.' The concluding paragraph of the opinion follows:

"The sum of this results from the addition of definite facts. Plaintiff is qualified to operate a first-run motion picture theatre in Philadelphia. Defendants control the production and distribution of more than 80% of the feature pictures in this country, and no exhibitor can successfully operate without access to defendants' product. Plaintiff asked for the product. He was refused. If its Erlanger Theatre had been owned or controlled by Warner Bros. a part of defendants' product would have been exhibited at the Erlanger. Uniform participation by competitors in a particular system of doing business where each is aware of the others' activities, the effect of which is the restraint of interstate commerce, is sufficient to establish an unlawful conspiracy under the statutes before us. In the case at bar it is necessary to conclude that plaintiff has sustained its charges, as each of the distributor defendants knew that its refusal to lease pictures to plaintiff, together with the refusal of all, would result in the creation of an illegal monopoly in the business of exhibiting first-run pictures in Philadelphia by Warner Bros.; that Warner Bros. have attempted to and are monopolizing such business; that distributor-defendants have aided Warner Bros. to monopolize; and that the monopoly is only made possible by the cooperation between Warner Bros. and the distributors."

Mr. Myers concludes by stating that the "decision is another in a long list of developments indicating that the Government will prevail in its action against the Big Eight and that monopoly and monopolistic practices will be driven out of the motion picture industry."

Independent exhibitors have good cause to rejoice because of this decision, for it points up the trend of recent Court decisions toward fulfilment of the true purpose of the Sherman Act—the maintenance of free competition between individuals and corporations, and the granting to every one of equal freedom of economic opportunity.



Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

# HARRISON'S REPORTS

**Yearly Subscription Rates:**

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Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the ExhibitorsIts Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 1945

No. 33

**THE END OF THE WAR**

"The end of the war," states the New York Times in its August 15 issue, "brings the country face to face with its most difficult economic problems since the depression. Most experts agree that war mobilization, gigantic task though it was, will prove to have been simple compared with the task of returning to peace conditions without serious economic effects. . . ."

"There is no doubt that the Administration is keenly aware of the economic dangers ahead and that key officials are struggling desperately to head off excessive unemployment, deflation, or inflation. However, since all of the Government's programming was laid down on the assumption that the war in the Pacific would last until late this year, the shock of readjustment is admittedly terrific. . . ."

The article points out also that the Government's leading economists agree that temporary unemployment of up to eight million persons may be expected within the next six months.

There is no question that the sudden collapse of Japan has caught the nation unprepared and that we are headed for a period of economic stress that will have a serious effect on our national economic life for many months to come until a transition to a peacetime economy is completed.

It is, therefore, of the utmost importance for the individual exhibitor to make his plans now for the coming months. He must learn to practice economies he did not consider during the lush period of the past few years, and he must learn to depend on his own initiative and resourcefulness to carry him safely over the problems of the coming months. Above all, he must now exercise greater care than ever as to the prices he should pay for pictures.

Think ahead! Think carefully!

**AGAIN ABOUT CONCEALED ADVERTISEMENTS IN FILMS**

Among the statements made by Mr. Harold Heffernan in his revealing article on concealed advertising in feature pictures, which was reproduced in last week's issue, was that Walter S. Kline, an advertising agent with headquarters in Hollywood, who makes his livelihood out of "planting" such advertisements for numerous clients, has stated that he pays nothing to the producers for plugging his clients' products. "On the other hand," Mr. Kline is credited with saying, "I save them money by dressing their sets and loaning them the use of standard items and props they otherwise would have difficulty in obtaining quickly."

HARRISON'S REPORTS has been exposing concealed advertising in pictures for many years, and it has often stated that such advertising was apparently paid for, perhaps not to the studio directly, but in all probab-

ity to some underling who accepted compensation in some form without the knowledge of his superiors.

A few times, this paper's statements have been challenged by indignant heads of the different studios. They maintained that their companies had not received compensation for the showing or mentioning of a nationally known commodity, and that, if such a commodity were shown or mentioned, it was for the purpose of creating atmosphere or authentic backgrounds.

Assuming that no actual money was paid for these concealed ads, what else can it be but payment "in kind" when nationally known articles of commercial concerns are plugged in feature pictures in exchange for the loan of props from either Mr. Kline or other advertising agents? And the fact must not be overlooked that this is done without the authority of the exhibitors who own the screens on which the pictures are projected.

The fact that a studio does not receive any money for the mentioning or showing of nationally known products in their pictures, however, is not the point at issue. What counts is the act itself, for the harm that is done to the theatre business is as great as it would be if the studio had been paid, since the public has no way of distinguishing the one from the other.

In his article Mr. Heffernan has stated also that Mr. Kline thinks that plugging a commercial product in a motion picture designed for entertainment "is great because it swoops down on the prospective buyer when he's relaxed and unsuspecting."

HARRISON'S REPORTS agrees that Mr. Kline's clients could not ask for a more perfect setting than a theatre filled with unsuspecting patrons to put over a subtle advertising plug. But that doesn't mean that they like it. As a matter of fact, a large percentage of the nation's movie-goers resent such plugs, for they rightfully feel that they are being imposed upon and even duped after paying an admission price to see and hear pure entertainment only.

The exhibitor, of course, is the one who suffers the consequences of the hostility of movie-goers towards concealed ads, for they show their resentment by staying away from his theatre.

My motive for once again calling attention to this unethical practice is to warn the producers that it must be checked now before it reaches proportions serious enough to cause the public to look upon motion pictures with contempt.

I am pleased to note, and to call your attention to it, that at least one company intends to take every possible precaution in an endeavor to keep out of its pictures anything that might be misconstrued as concealed advertising. That company is Metro-Goldwyn-

(Continued on last page)

### **"Follow That Woman" with William Gargan and Nancy Kelly**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 70 min.)

This latest of the Pine-Thomas program pictures is a passable murder-melodrama with comedy. The story is patterned after the formula of the "Thin Man" pictures—that is, it depicts the efforts of a wife to help her husband, a private detective, solve a mystery. This theme, however, has been used so often that it fails to be particularly amusing, and, since the plot developments lack freshness, one's interest in the proceedings often lags. As is usual in pictures of this type, the comedy is provoked by the complications the wife gets herself into. The picture may find favor with audiences who are not too discriminating:—

While at a night-club celebrating his wedding anniversary with Nancy Kelly, his wife, William Gargan, a private detective, receives an urgent note from Audrey Young, the club's singer, to come to her dressing room. By the time he and Nancy reach the dressing room, Audrey is murdered mysteriously. Gargan, scheduled for induction into the army on the following day, does not want to bother with the case, and he requests Don Costello, the club owner, to forget that he had any knowledge of the crime. Immediately following Gargan's departure for camp, Pierre Watkin, a wealthy, elderly socialite, telephones his assistant (Ed Gargan) and asks that he investigate the disappearance of Audrey, but suggests that he keep it confidential. Nancy, present in the office, compels the assistant to accept the assignment. She decides to investigate the crime herself, and finds, to her surprise, that the murder had not been reported, and that the body had disappeared. While following different clues, Nancy is threatened by an unknown assailant. The assistant, fearing for her safety, notifies Gargan, who succeeds in obtaining an emergency furlough to solve the case and to protect his wife. Despite Gargan's admonitions, Nancy insists upon carrying on her private investigation, and she obtains most of her clues from Gargan, who talked in his sleep. Gargan, though hindered by Nancy's well-meaning efforts, eventually tracks down the suspects, all of whom were present at the club at the time of the murder, and who at one time or another were involved romantically with the dead singer. After several narrow escapes, Gargan eventually finds the body and traps the killer.

Winston Miller and Maxwell Shane wrote the screen play, Mr. Shane produced it, and Lew Landers directed it. The cast includes Regis Toomey, Byron Barr and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"I Love a Bandleader" with Phil Harris, "Rochester," and Leslie Brooks**

(Columbia, Sept. 13; time, 71 min.)

A fair program comedy with music. The story is trite and thin; but it has several situations that provoke laughter, and the music, which is of the popular variety, is tuneful. To most spectators, the satisfying parts of the picture will be those in which Phil Harris sings with his band; he is talented and has an ingratiating smile. Harris, who appears on the Jack Benny radio program, is a popular entertainer, as is "Rochester," who, too, is featured on the Benny show. Their combined popularity should be of help at the box-office:—

Harris, a shy, scenic painter in a New York night-

club, tries on a full dress suit in one of the dressing rooms. Proud of the way the clothes fitted him, he walks about the empty club and encounters Leslie Brooks, a Buffalo girl, who had just been refused a singing job by the club's manager. Leslie, impressed by Harris' clothes, believes him to be an important figure and asks him to listen to her voice. She becomes self-conscious, however, and hurries away. Harris, following her, trips and hurts his head. He becomes an amnesia victim. To help Harris re-establish his identity, a doctor brings him back to the night-club, but no one recognizes him. Harris starts waving his arms when the orchestra begins to play, and the night-club manager conceives the idea that he may have been a bandleader prior to his accident. As a publicity stunt, he employs Harris to lead the band. Leslie is coerced by her agent (Walter Catlett) to "establish" Harris' identity by posing as his fiancée from Buffalo so that she could obtain a job as the band's vocalist. Harris becomes an overnight sensation. Satisfied with his success, Harris becomes disillusioned when he overhears Leslie inform a friend that she was posing as his fiancée as part of a publicity stunt. Embittered, he runs away. Leslie, sincerely in love with him, refuses to sing unless he leads the band. Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Harris' manservant, decides to take matters in hand. He locates Harris at the railroad station and, by accusing him of stealing the dress suit, arranges for two policemen to escort him back to the club. There, "Rochester" knocks him unconscious when he insists upon leaving. The blow restores Harris' memory, and the club's manager, seeing greater publicity in this new development, induces Harris to remain as his star. It ends with Harris and Leslie in each other's arms.

Paul Yawitz wrote the screen play, Michel Kraike produced it, and Del Lord directed it. The cast includes The Four Vs, the Jordan Sisters, Pierre Watkin and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Tell It to a Star" with Ruth Terry and Robert Livingston**

(Republic, Aug. 16; time, 67 min.)

A fairly pleasant program comedy with music. There is not much to the story; but, since it moves along at a steady pace, and is acted engagingly by the leading players, it serves well enough as an hour's light entertainment. On occasion, it is quite amusing, mainly because of the characterization of Alan Mowbray, a suave but dishonest gentleman, who lives by his wits. Theatres that cater to audiences that are not too exacting in their demands so long as a picture has comedy and tuneful music should do fairly well with this supporting feature:—

Ruth Terry, a cigar counter girl in a swanky Florida hotel, whose ambition it was to sing with Robert Livingston's band, which broadcast from the hotel, is visited by Mowbray, her uncle, whom she believed to be an influential business tycoon. Learning of Ruth's aspirations, Mowbray decides to help her. He moves into the hotel and makes a profound impression on Isabel Randolph, the owner, much to the displeasure of Franklin Pangborn, her hotel manager. He then persuades Ruth to quit her job, and outfits her with beautiful clothes, charging them to his hotel bill. Ruth soon finds herself singing with Livingston's band when Mowbray uses his charm on Miss Randolph. Her singing proves sensational, and she and Livingston



fall in love, arousing the jealousy of Adrian Booth, the band's regular singer. When Ruth inadvertently learns of his true financial status, Mowbray persuades her to keep his secret for a few days so that he could raise funds to pay his hotel bill. Mowbray next embarks on a scheme to insure Ruth's career as a singer, and to get himself out of his financial difficulties. Posing as the head of a large mattress company, he signs a contract with Livingston for a weekly radio show, and then attempts to sell Miss Randolph a truck load of stolen mattresses. Adrian and Pangborn learn of the scheme and expose him. Livingston's band, realizing that their leader had been duped, deserts him upon Adrian's urging. It all turns out for the best, however, when Ruth organizes an all-girl band to appear with Livingston in time for his broadcast, and when Mowbray, using his charm and his wits, discredits Pangborn in the eyes of Miss Randolph and induces her to appoint him as the new manager.

John K. Butler wrote the screen play, Walter H. Goetz produced it, and Frank McDonald directed it. The cast includes Frank Orth, Tom Dugan, Aurora Miranda and others. Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Lost Weekend" with Ray Milland and Jane Wyman**

(Paramount, Nov. 23; time, 99 min.)

From an artistic point of view, this drama is impressive, for the direction and the acting are of the highest order. But it is hardly the type of entertainment that motion picture-goers want to see today, for it is grim and depressing. Its chief appeal will probably be to class audiences and to those who seek the unusual in motion pictures. It is definitely not a picture for children, and its reception by women is doubtful; they may find the action too morbid for their tastes. The story, which is based on the widely read novel by Charles S. Jackson, revolves around a chronic drunkard, and it depicts his physical and mental sufferings as a result of his inability to curb his frenzied desire for drink. Were it not for the effective way in which Ray Milland portrays the alcoholic, he would be an extremely unsympathetic character, for his actions are unpleasant almost to the end; one cannot, however, help feeling pity for him. One particular sequence, where Milland, in a state of delirium, sees a flying bat corner and kill a mouse, is so starkly realistic that persons with sensitive stomachs will be sickened. Human suffering, whether physical or mental, is not a cheerful theme, and this picture is certainly not a pretty one:

Having just recovered from a severe case of alcoholism, Milland, an aspiring writer, contrives to avoid spending a weekend in the country with his younger brother, Phil Terry, whose apartment he shared, so that he could resume his drinking. Left without any money for drinks, Milland, frenzied with thirst, steals ten dollars his brother had hidden for a cleaning woman, and purchases two quarts of rye whiskey. He drinks himself into unconsciousness. On the following day, he resolves to give up drink and get to work on his novel, but his lust for alcohol proves so strong that he gives up trying to write and resorts to purse snatching to raise money for liquor. Weak from hunger and excessive drinking, he collapses in the street and is taken to the alcoholic ward of a local hospital. There, a male nurse chides him for being an incurable drunkard. Unable to stand the ravings of

the other alcoholics, Milland escapes from the ward and forces a liquor store proprietor to give him a bottle of rye without payment. He returns home and finds Jane Wyman, his sweetheart, waiting for him. She puts him to bed. On the following morning, Milland, ashamed, determines to commit suicide in the belief that he would be better off dead than a slave to drink. But Jane, who had long made sacrificial efforts to cure him, learns of his intentions. She foils his suicide attempt and convinces him that he possessed the will power to rehabilitate himself.

Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder wrote the screen play. Mr. Brackett produced it, and Mr. Wilder directed it. The cast includes Howard da Silva, Doris Dowling, Frank Faylen and others.

### **"Duffy's Tavern" with Ed Gardner, Victor Moore and Marjorie Reynolds**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 97 min.)

This is a good mass entertainment. There is no doubt that it will do big business, for, in addition to the popularity of the numerous guest stars who take part in the action, the title itself is a big drawing card, for the radio program from which it is taken is one of the most popular in the country. What puts the picture over are the gags, some of which are extremely comical, and the specialty numbers by the stars, for the story itself is pretty thin. Ed Gardner, as "Archie," the manager of "Duffy's Tavern," is pretty good; he brightens things up considerably each time that he appears, provoking hearty laughter by his misuse of words. Victor Moore, too, contributes much to the comedy. Of the thirty-four stars that appear either in skits or in musical numbers, the best known among them include Bing Crosby, Betty Hutton, Paulette Goddard, Dorothy Lamour, Eddie Bracken, Cass Daley, Alan Ladd, Sonny Tufts, Brian Donlevy, William Demarest, Diana Lynn, Robert Benchley and, for good measure Crosby's four young sons. All are very good, but outstanding are Crosby, Cass Daley and Betty Hutton, who sing and jest in their inimitable styles. Top laughing honors, however, go to Eddie Bracken for his hilarious portrayal of a movie double who does the dirty work for the star.

The story concerns itself with the difficulties Gardner gets himself into when he feeds on credit fourteen ex-servicemen, who were awaiting the re-opening of a phonograph record company, owned by Victor Moore, who claimed that he could not open because of shellac shortage. Actually, Moore was in financial straits, and his credit was worthless. Gardner's troubles begin when his employer finds a discrepancy in the books, a means Gardner had used to cover up the credit he was extending to the veterans. With the district attorney on his trail, Gardner undertakes to enlist a group of Hollywood stars to a stage benefit to raise funds for the re-opening of the factory so that the veterans could return to work. Everything works out satisfactorily in the end, but not before Gardner gets himself in and out of numerous situations involving the stars and the police.

Worked into this thin plot is a pleasant romance between Marjorie Reynolds, as Moore's daughter, and Barry Sullivan, as the leader of the unemployed men. Melvin Frank and Norman Panama wrote the screen play, Danny Dare produced it, and Hal Walker directed it. The cast includes Arturo de Cordova, Billy de Wolfe, Johnny Coy and others.

Mayer. In a letter sent to me last week, Mr. William F. Rodgers, vice-president and general sales manager of MGM, had the following to say:

"My dear Pete:

"You will recall sometime ago you had written me concerning what you choose to call advertising in some of the pictures, and I know you full well realize that to the best of our knowledge no one in our organization has benefitted by any such material used in our pictures.

"There were one or two flagrant examples which were called to our attention and, as I mentioned to you in my last letter, it was our opinion that there was no justification for the Philip Morris sign appearing in *THE CLOCK*; on the other hand, our technical people seemed to think that authenticity was necessary, and while I might feel that sometimes they have gone too far in that, nevertheless, I believe, and I am sure you do, too, that they were guided by the best of motives. However, of one thing sure, every possible safeguard will be made for the future.

"I have discussed the matter with Messrs. Rubin and Schenck and Mr. Schenck has discussed it with Mr. Mayer, so you can depend upon it, as I mentioned, that a complete investigation has been made and every possible precaution taken for the future.

"With kindest regards."

Now that we have MGM on record as willing to take every possible precaution against commercial advertising in pictures sold as entertainments, let us ask every other company to make its stand on this issue clear. The exhibitors are entitled to know whether or not each company intends to keep its pictures free from subtle advertising, and HARRISON'S REPORTS will be more than pleased to publish whatever statement they wish to make on the matter.

In the meantime, I would suggest that you watch the reviews in this paper closely to learn which pictures contain concealed advertising so that you may guide yourself accordingly.

\* \* \*

While on the subject of concealed advertising, I should like to call your attention to the following letter sent to me this week by a prominent New York State exhibitor:

"Dear Mr. Harrison:

"I know that, in the past, you have been exposing advertising in pictures released by film companies, so I do wish you would look at the two-reel, Technicolor short put out by Warners called *CONEY ISLAND HONEYMOON*.

"This should be a free reel, as practically all it does, is advertise Pepsi-Cola."

I have not had a chance to see the aforementioned two-reel subject, but since the exhibitor who sent me this information is known to me personally I can assure you that what he has to say can be accepted as accurate.

### A SUGGESTION CONCERNING TRAVELING CARNIVALS

Referring to our editorial, "Traveling Carnivals," which appeared in the July 21 issue, Mr. Ernest W. Cragin, of Cragin and Pike, operators of the El Portal Theatre in Reno, Nevada, has written the following letter to this office:

"The City of Las Vegas passed an Ordinance some years ago imposing a fee of \$100.00 per day on Carnivals. This was very effective and worked fine until

a few years ago the Veteran organizations of the State had the law changed making it possible for Carnivals to show in the State without a license providing the Carnival was sponsored by one of the Veteran organizations. There is no question but what this law would be declared unconstitutional if any group would take it to Court, but everyone seems to be afraid to step on their toes and no doubt many of the exhibitors in the State are Veterans including the writer.

"I think the most effective way to handle the Carnival situation is through sanitation—if the City will set up an ordinance requiring so many toilets to so many seats or if they will have the Health Department of a City make these regulations—those bringing Carnivals into a city will find it hard to combat rules and regulations for health and safety."

Mr. Cragin's suggestion that sanitation laws be invoked to combat the Carnival situation is indeed a sound one, for no organization, no matter how powerful politically, would conscientiously seek to nullify rules and regulations involving the public's health and safety. As a matter of fact, the invocation of sanitation regulations, as well as of fire prevention regulations, provided both are made sufficiently strong, may well prove to be more of a deterrent to traveling carnivals than an ordinance requiring them to pay a substantial license fee for the privilege of operating within the City's limits. An ordinance combining all these requirements would, of course, be ideal.

Traveling carnivals that stop annually in different towns have long been a thorn in the side of established merchants and business men, for not only do they contribute nothing to the betterment of the town, but they take out thousands of dollars that would otherwise be spent among established businesses, the owners of which help in a large measure to support the town through payment of license fees and local taxes. In most cases, these carnivals, through low-class side shows and devious gambling devices, are often responsible for the breeding of criminal violations.

Of a town's established business men, the motion picture exhibitor, more than any other, suffers from these visiting carnivals, for theatre attendance is cut to a considerable degree every time one of them stops in town.

Those of you who have to buck this undesirable competition should feel no qualms about trying to induce your local lawmakers to adopt an ordinance that would require carnivals to abide by strict sanitation regulations and fire prevention rules, as well as to pay to the town a substantial license fee to cover, among other expenses incurred, the cost of police protection.

You should point out to the town's officials that the law demands of you compliance with rules and regulations of this type, and that unless similar demands were to be made of traveling carnivals, they (the officials) would be guilty of permitting unfair competition to be practiced against you, an established theatreman, who contributes steadily to the city's welfare, not only in a recreational sense, but also through the payment of wages to local help and through the payment of taxes into the town's treasury.

No fair-minded body of lawmakers, if presented with these facts, would fail to recognize the justice of an exhibitor's request for an ordinance to regulate carnivals. And, in all probability, few carnivals would find it profitable to operate in a town that had an effective ordinance combining the aforementioned requirements.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXVII

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 1945

No. 33

(Partial Index No. 4—Pages 106 to 128 Incl.)

## Titles of Pictures Reviewed on Page

Adventures of Rusty, The—Columbia (67 min.)	119
Anchors Aweigh—MGM (139 min.)	115
And Then There Were None—20th Century-Fox (97 min.)	110
Arson Squad—PRC (64 min.)	106
Beautiful Cheat, The—Universal (59 min.)	110
Both Barrels Blazing—Columbia (57 min.)	not reviewed
Captain Kidd—United Artists (88 min.)	124
Caribbean Mystery, The—20th Century-Fox (65 min.)	114
Cheaters, The—Republic (87 min.)	107
Christmas in Connecticut—Warner Bros. (101 min.)	115
Dangerous Intruder—PRC (62 min.)	122
Dangerous Partners—MGM (78 min.)	123
Easy to Look At—Universal (64 min.)	123
Falcon in San Francisco, The—RKO (66 min.)	114
Frontier Fugitives—PRC (55 min.)	not reviewed
Gangs of the Waterfront—Republic (56 min.)	106
George White's Scandals—RKO (95 min.)	124
Guest Wife—United Artists (88 min.)	118
Her Highness and the Bellboy—MGM (108 min.)	111
Hidden Eye, The—MGM (69 min.)	118
Jealousy—Republic (71 min.)	118
Johnny Angel—RKO (79 min.)	123
Kiss and Tell—Columbia (90 min.)	127
Lady on a Train—Universal (93 min.)	126
Mama Loves Papa—RKO (60 min.)	124
On Stage Everybody—Universal (75 min.)	111
Our Vines Have Tender Grapes—MGM (105 min.)	114
Over 21—Columbia (103 min.)	122
Pride of the Marines—Warner Bros. (119 min.)	126
Radio Stars on Parade—RKO (69 min.)	122
Rhythm Roundup—Columbia (66 min.)	not reviewed
Road to Alcatraz—Republic (60 min.)	110
Rustlers of the Badlands—Columbia (58 min.)	not reviewed
Shanghai Cobra, The—Monogram (63 min.)	127
Stagecoach Outlaws—PRC (58 min.)	not reviewed
You Came Along—Paramount (103 min.)	107
Week-End at the Waldorf—MGM (128 min.)	119
White Pongo—PRC (72 min.)	106

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

## Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

6037 Escape in the Fog—Foch-Wright	Apr. 5
6026 Eve Knew Her Apples—Miller-Wright	Apr. 12
6222 Rockin' in the Rockies—Stooges-Hughes (67 m.)	Apr. 17
6023 Power of the Whistler—Dix-Carter	Apr. 19
6206 Return of the Rurango Kid—Starrett (58 m.)	Apr. 19
6006 Counter-Attack—Muni-Chapman	Apr. 26
6031 Boston Blackie Booked on Suspicion—Morris	May 10
6207 Both Barrels Blazing—Charles Starrett (57 m.)	May 17
6010 The Fighting Guardsman—Parker-Louise	May 24
6029 Ten Cents a Dance—Frazee-Lloyd	June 7
6223 Rhythm Round-Up—West. musical (66m.)	June 7
6036 Blonde from Brooklyn—Stanton-Merrick	June 21
6030 Boston Blackie's Rendezvous—Morris	July 5
6004 A Thousand and One Nights—Wilde-Keyes (reset)	July 26
6042 You Can't Do Without Love—Lynn-Stewart (reset)	July 26
6020 The Gay Senorita—Falkenburg-Bannon	Aug. 9
6208 Rustlers of the Badlands—Starrett (58m.)	Aug. 16
6001 Over 21—Dunne-Knox	Aug. 23

Adventures of Rusty—Donaldson-Nagel	Sept. 6
I Love a Bandleader—Harris—"Rochester"	Sept. 13
Song of the Prairie—Western musical	Sept. 27
Specials	
A Song to Remember—Muni-Oberon	Mar. 1
Kiss and Tell—Temple-Abel	Sept.

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

Block 11	
522 Without Love—Hepburn-Tracy	May
523 Gentle Annie—Craig-Reed	May
524 The Clock—Garland-Walker	May
525 The Picture of Dorian Gray—Sanders-Hatfield	June
526 Son of Lassie—Lawford-Crisp	June
Block 12	
528 Thrill of a Romance—Johnson-Williams	July
529 Twice Blessed—Lee and Lynn Wilde	July
530 Bewitched—Thaxter-Gwenn	July
Specials	
500 Dragon Seed—Hepburn-Huston	Aug. '44
511 Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo—Tracy-Johnson	January
512 Meet Me in St. Louis—Garland-O'Brien	January
521 National Velvet—Rooney-Taylor	April
527 Valley of Decision—Garson-Peck	June
531 Anchors Aweigh—Kelly-Sinatra-Grayson	Aug. '45

## Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

406 G. I. Honeymoon—Storm-Cookson	Apr. 6
418 The Scarlet Clue—Sidney Toler	May 5
430 In Old New Mexico—Renaldo (62 min.)	May 15
462 Springtime in Texas—Wakely (57 min.)	June 2
424 Trouble Chasers—Howard-Gilbert	June 2
451 Flame of the West—Brown-Woodbury (70m.)	June 9
411 Muggs Rides Again—East Side Kids	June 16
405 China's Little Devils—Carey-Kelly (re.)	July 14
456 Stranger from Santa Fe—J. M. Brown (53 min.) (re.)	Aug. 4
463 Saddle Serenade—Wakely (reset)	Aug. 11
404 Divorce—Francis-Cabot	Aug. 18
412 Come Out Fighting—East Side Kids	not set
415 The Shanghai Cobra—Toler	not set

## Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

Block 5	
4421 Affairs of Susan—Fontaine-Brent	May 25
4422 Murder, He Says—MacMurray-Walker	June 8
4423 Scared Stiff—Haley-Savage	June 22
4424 A Medal for Benny—Lamour-DeCordova	June 29
Block 6	
4426 Out of this World—Bracken-Lynn	July 13
4427 Midnight Manhunt—Gargan-Savage (formerly "One Exciting Night")	July 27
4428 You Came Along—Scott-Cummings	Sept. 14
Special	
4431 Incendiary Blonde—Hutton-DeCordova	Aug. 31
Reissues	
4432 Sign of the Cross—Colbert-March	No nat'l rel. date
4433 Northwest Mounted Police—Cooper-Carroll	Aug. 26
4434 This Gun for Hire—Ladd-Lake	Aug. 26
(End of 1944-45 Season)	

## Beginning of 1945-46 Season

Block 1

Duffy's Tavern—Ed Gardner	not set
Follow That Woman—Gargan-Kelly	not set
The Lost Weekend—Milland-Wyman	not set
Love Letters—Jones-Cotten	not set

**PRC Pictures, Inc. Features**

(625 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

- 502 Crime, Inc.—Tilton-Neal ..... Apr. 15  
 558 Shadows of Death—Buster Crabbe (56 m.)... Apr. 19  
 515 Hollywood & Vine—Ellison-McKay ..... Apr. 25  
 521 Phantom of 42nd St.—O'Brien-Aldridge... May 2  
 561 Enemy of the Law—Texas Rangers (56 m.)... May 7  
 522 The Lady Confesses—Hughes-Beaumont ... May 16  
 524 The Missing Corpse—Bromberg-Jenks ..... June 1  
 559 Gangsters' Den—Buster Crabbe (55 m.)... June 14  
 The Silver Fleet—English cast (reset) ..... July 1  
 562 Three in the Saddle—Texas Rangers  
 (60 min.) (re.) ..... July 26  
 Stagecoach Outlaws—Buster Crabbe (58m.)... Aug. 17  
 Frontier Fugitives—Texas Rangers (55m.)... Sept. 1  
 Arson Squad—Albertson-Armstrong ..... Sept. 11  
 Dangerous Intruder—Arnt-Borg ..... Sept. 21  
 Apology for Murder—Savage-Beaumont ... Sept. 27  
 Border Badman—Buster Crabbe ..... Oct. 10  
 Shadow of Terror—Fraser-Gillern ..... Oct. 14  
 Flaming Bullets—Texas Rangers ..... Oct. 15  
 Fighting Bill Carson—Buster Crabbe ..... Oct. 31

**Republic Features**

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

- 414 Identity Unknown—Arlen-Walker ..... Apr. 2  
 413 Earl Carroll Vanities—O'Keefe-Moore ..... Apr. 5  
 465 Corpus Christi Bandits—Lane-Watts (55 m.)... Apr. 20  
 433 The Phantom Speaks—Arlen-Ridges ..... May 10  
 3318 Lone Texas Ranger—Elliott-Blake (56 m.)... May 20  
 434 The Vampire's Ghost—Abbott-Stewart ..... May 21  
 416 Three's a Crowd—Blake-Gordon ..... May 23  
 415 Flame of the Barbary Coast—Wayne-Dvorak... May 28  
 455 Sante Fe Saddle Mates—Carson-Stirling  
 (56 m.) ..... June 2  
 420 A Sporting Chance—Randolph-O'Malley... June 4  
 442 Bells of Rosarita—Roy Rogers (68 m.)... June 19  
 417 The Chicago Kid—Barry-Roberts ..... June 29  
 422 Gangs of the Waterfront—Armstrong-  
 Bachelor ..... July 3  
 423 Road to Alcatraz—Lowery-Storey ..... July 10  
 466 Trail of Kit Carson—Lane-London (56 min.)... July 11  
 456 Oregon Trail—Carson-Stewart (56 min.)... July 14  
 421 The Cheaters—Shildkraut-Palette ..... July 15  
 419 Hitchhike to Happiness—Pearce-Evans ..... July 16  
 424 Jealousy—Loder-Randolph ..... July 23  
 418 Steppin' in Society—Horton-George ..... July 29  
 443 Man from Oklahoma—Roy Rogers (68 min.)... Aug. 1  
 425 Tell It to a Star—Livingston-Terry ..... Aug. 16  
 426 Swingin' on a Rainbow—Frazee-Taylor ..... Sept. 1

**RKO Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

**Block 4**

- 516 Zombies on Broadway—Brown-Carney .....  
 517 The Body Snatcher—Karloff-Daniel .....  
 518 Tarzan and the Amazons—Weissmuller .....  
 519 China Sky—Scott-Warrick .....  
 520 Those Endearing Young Charms—Young-Day.....

**Block 5**

- 521 Two O'Clock Courage—Conway-Rutherford.....  
 522 The Brighton Strangler—Loder-Duprez .....  
 523 Back to Bataan—Wayne-Quinn .....  
 524 West of the Pecos—Mitchum-Hale .....

**Specials**

- 551 The Princess and the Pirate—Bob Hope .....  
 581 Casanova Brown—Cooper-Wright .....  
 582 Woman in the Window—Bennett-Robinson .....  
 583 Belle of the Yukon—Scott-Lee .....  
 584 It's a Pleasure—Henie-O'Shea .....  
 591 The Three Caballeros—Disney .....  
 552 Wonder Man—Kaye-Mayo .....

(End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season****Block 1**

- 601 Mama Loves Papa—Leon Errol .....  
 602 George White's Scandals—Haley-Davis .....  
 603 The Falcon in San Francisco—Tom Conway .....  
 604 Johnny Angel—Raft-Trevor-Hasso .....  
 605 Radio Stars on Parade—Carney-Brown .....

**Specials**

- 681 Along Came Jones—Cooper-Young .....

**Twentieth Century-Fox Features**

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

- 520 The Song of Bernadette—Jennifer Jones ..... April  
 521 A Royal Scandal—Bankhead-Eythe ..... April  
 522 Molly and Me—Woolley-Fields ..... April  
 524 Diamond Horseshoe—Grable-Haymes ..... May  
 525 The Bullfighters—Laurel & Hardy ..... May  
 526 Where Do We Go from Here—  
 MacMurray-Leslie ..... June  
 527 Don Juan Quilligan—Bendix-Blondell ..... June  
 523 Call of the Wild—Gable-Young (reissue) ..... June  
 528 Within these Walls—Mitchell-Anderson ..... July  
 529 Nob Hill—Raft-Blaine ..... July  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 601 A Bell for Adano—Hodiak-Tierney ..... Aug.  
 603 Junior Miss—Garner-Joslyn ..... Aug.  
 606 The Way Ahead—David Niven ..... Aug.  
 604 Captain Eddie—MacMurray-Bari ..... Sept.  
 605 Carribean Mystery—Dunn-Ryan ..... Sept.  
 Special  
 602 Wilson—Knox-Fitzgerald ..... Aug.

**United Artists Features**

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- Brewster's Millions—O'Keefe-Walker ..... Apr. 7  
 It's in the Bag—Fred Allen ..... Apr. 21  
 Colonel Blimp—English cast ..... May 4  
 The Great John L.—McLure-Darnell ..... June 29  
 Story of G.I. Joe—Meredith-Mitchum ..... July 13  
 Guest Wife—Colbert-Ameche ..... July 27  
 The Southerner—Scott-Field (formerly "Hold  
 Autumn in Your Hand") ..... Aug. 10  
 Captain Kidd—Laughton-Scott ..... Aug. 24  
 The Outlaw—Russell-Huston ..... Aug. 24  
 Paris-Underground—Bennett-Fields ..... Sept. 14  
 Spellbound—Bergman-Peck ..... Sept. 28  
 Blood on the Sun—Cagney-Sidney ..... June 15  
 Bedside Manner—Hussey-Carroll ..... June 22

**Universal Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

- 9027 I'll Remember April—Jean-Grant ..... Apr. 13  
 9040 Song of the Sarong—Gargan-Kelly ..... Apr. 20  
 9073 Salome—Where She Danced—De Carlo-  
 Bruce ..... Apr. 27  
 9083 Beyond the Pecos—Rod Cameron (59 m.)... Apr. 27  
 9011 Patrick the Great—O'Connor-Ryan ..... May 4  
 9028 Honeymoon Ahead—Jones-McDonald ..... May 11  
 9033 Swing out Sister—Cameron-Treacher ..... May 18  
 9016 See My Lawyer—Olsen & Johnson ..... May 25  
 9014 That's the Spirit—Oakie-Ryan (re.) ..... June 1  
 9084 Renegades of the Rio Grande—Rod Cameron  
 (57 min.) ..... June 1  
 9041 I'll Tell the World—Tracy-Preisser ..... June 8  
 9042 Blonde Ransom—Grey-Cook (re.) ..... June 15  
 9043 Penthouse Rhythm—Collier-Grant ..... June 22  
 9032 The Frozen Ghost—Chaney-Ankers ..... June 29  
 9038 Jungle Captive—Kruger-Ward ..... June 29  
 9003 The Naughty Nineties—Abbott & Costello... July 6  
 9015 On Stage Everybody—Oakie-Ryan ..... July 13  
 9044 The Beautiful Cheat—Granville-Beery, Jr. ... July 20  
 9025A The Woman in Green—Rathbone-Bruce .. July 27  
 9045 Easy to Look At—Jean-Grant ..... Aug. 10  
 Strange Affair of Uncle Harry—  
 Sanders-Raines-Fitzgerald (reset) ..... Aug. 17  
 Lady on a Train—Deanna Durbin (reset) .. Aug. 24  
 Reissues  
 9096 Imitation of Life—Claudette Colbert ..... June 15  
 9097 East Side of Heaven—Bing Crosby ..... June 15  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 501 Shady Lady—Paige-Simms ..... Sept. 7  
 502 Men in Her Diary—Hall-Allbritton ..... Sept. 14  
 503 River Gang—Jean-Qualen ..... Sept. 21  
 504 Night in Paradise—Oberon-Bey ..... Sept. 28  
 505 Strange Confession—Chaney-Joyce ..... Oct. 5  
 506 Senorita from the West—Jones-Granville ..... Oct. 12  
 507 That Night with You—Tone-Foster ..... Oct. 19



**Warner Bros. Features**

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

- 414 God is My Co-Pilot—Morgan-Massey.....Apr. 7  
 415 The Horn Blows at Midnight—Jack Benny....Apr. 28  
 416 Escape in the Desert—Dorn-Dantine.....May 19  
 417 Pillow to Post—Lupino-Prince.....June 9  
 418 Conflict—Bogart-Smith.....June 30  
 419 The Corn is Green—Davis-Dall.....July 21  
 420 Christmas in Connecticut—Stanwyck-Morgan.Aug. 11

(End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 501 Pride of the Marines—Garfield-Parker.....Sept. 1  
 502 Rhapsody in Blue—Alda-Leslie.....Sept. 22  
 Three Strangers—Fitzgerald-Greenstreet.....Oct. 13  
 Mildred Pierce—Crawford-Carson-Scott.....Oct. 20  
 San Antonio—Flynn-Smith.....Oct. 27  
 Devotion—Lupino-de Havilland-Henreid....Nov. 24

**SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE****Columbia—One Reel**

- 6752 The Egg Yegg—Fox & Crow (7½ m.).....May 4  
 6663 Victory Reel (V-E Day).....May 8  
 6955 Lowe, Hite & Stanley—Film Vodvil (11 m.)..May 11  
 6859 Screen Snapshots No. 9 (9½ m.).....May 17  
 6901 A Harbor Goes to France—Panoramic  
 (10 m.).....May 18  
 6659 Community Sings No. 9 (10 m.).....May 25  
 6502 Rippling Romance—Col. Rhap. (8 m.)....June 21  
 6660 Community Sings No. 10 (10m.).....June 29  
 6704 Bobby Socks—Phantasy (6m.).....July 12  
 6503 Fiesta Time—Col. Rhapsody (7½ m.).....July 12  
 6808 Hi Ho Rodeo—Sports (9m.).....July 22  
 6753 Kukunuts—Fox & Crow (6½ m.).....July 26  
 6661 Community Sings No. 11 (10 m.).....July 26  
 6860 Screen Snapshots No. 10 (10 m.).....July 27  
 6504 Hot Foot Light—Color Rhap. (7m.).....Aug. 2  
 6809 Chips and Putts—Sports (9m.).....Aug. 10  
 6662 Community Sings No. 12 (10m.).....Aug. 23  
 6754 Treasure Jest—Fox & Crow (6½m.).....Aug. 30  
 6810 Salmon Fishing—Sports (9m.).....Sept. 2  
 6505 Carnival Courage—Col. Rhap. (7m.).....Sept. 6

(End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 7951 Milt Britton & Band—Film Vodvil.....Aug. 30  
 7851 Screen Snapshots No. 1.....Sept. 7  
 7751 Phoney Baloney—Fox & Crow.....Sept. 13  
 7601 Catnipped—Flippy.....Sept. 20  
 7701 Simple Siren—Phantasy.....Sept. 20  
 7651 Community Sings No. 1.....Sept. 20  
 7501 River Ribber—Color Rhapsody.....Sept. 27  
 7801 Champion of the Cue—Sports.....Sept. 27

**Columbia—Two Reels**

- 6160 The Monster & the Ape (15 episodes).....Apr. 20  
 6433 Pistol Packin' Nitwits—Brendel (17 m.)....May 4  
 6411 Wife Decoy—Hugh Herbert (17 m.).....May 1  
 6423 The Jury Goes Round 'N Round—Vera Vague  
 (18 m.).....June 15  
 6405 Idiots Deluxe—Stooges (17½ m.).....July 20

(End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 7409 Vine, Women & Song—Musical Gaiety....Aug. 23  
 7401 If a Body Meets a Body—Stooges.....Aug. 30  
 7120 Jungle Raiders—Serial (15 episodes).....Sept. 7

**Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel****1943-44**

- K-576 The Seasaw and the Shoes—Pass. Par.  
 (10 m.).....May 5  
 (End of 1943-44 Season)

**1944-45**

- T-611 Shrines of Yucatan—Traveltalk (9 m.)....Feb. 24  
 T-612 See El Salvador—Traveltalk (10 m.).....Mar. 31  
 W-631 The Mouse Comes to Dinner—Cartoon  
 (7 m.).....May 5  
 W-632 Mouse in Manhattan—Cartoon (8 m.)....July 7  
 W-633 Tee for Two—Cartoon (7m.).....July 21  
 W-634 Swing Shift Cinderella—Cartoon.....Aug. 25  
 T-613 Modern Guatemala City—Traveltalk.....Aug. 25

**Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels****1943-44**

- A-502 Fall Guy—Special (18½ m.).....Apr. 14  
 A-503 The Last Installment—Special (18 m.)....May 5

- A-504 Phantoms, Inc.—Special (17 m.).....June 9  
 (End of 1943-44 Season)

**Paramount—One Reel**

- E4-4 Shape Ahoy—Popeye (6 m.).....Apr. 27  
 R4-7 White Rhapsody—Spotlight (9 m.).....May 4  
 P4-5 A Lamb in a Jamb—Noveltoon (6 m.).....May 4  
 L4-4 Unusual Occupations No. 4 (10 m.).....May 11  
 Y4-4 Talk of the Town—Speak. of Animals  
 (9 m.).....May 18  
 U4-5 Jasper's Minstrels—Puppetoon (9 m.).....May 25  
 D4-5 Daffydilly Daddy—Little Lulu (7 m.).....May 25  
 J4-5 Popular Science No. 5 (10 m.).....June 1  
 E4-5 For Better or Nurse—Popeye (6 m.).....June 8  
 R4-8 Fan Fare—Spotlight (9 m.).....June 8  
 D4-6 Snap Happy—Little Lulu (7 m.).....June 22  
 P4-6 A Self Made Mongrel—Noveltoon (7m.)...June 29  
 U4-6 Hatful of Dreams—Puppetoon (9 m.).....July 6  
 L4-5 Unusual Occupations No. 5 (10 m.).....July 13  
 Y4-5 A Musical Way—Speaking of Animals (8m.) July 20  
 R4-9 Canine-Feline Capers—Spotlight (9 m.)....July 27  
 U4-7 Jasper's Booby Traps—Puppetoon (8 m.)...Aug. 3  
 J4-6 Popular Science No. 6 (10 m.).....Aug. 10  
 R4-10 Campus Mermaids—Spotlight (8m.)....Sept. 7  
 L4-6 Unusual Occupations No. 6 (10m.).....Sept. 14  
 Y4-6 From A to Zoo—Speak. of Animals (9m.)..Sept. 21  
 U4-8 Jasper's Close Shave—Puppetoon (8m.)....Sept. 28

(End of 1944-45 Season)

**Paramount—Two Reels**

- FF4-4 Isle of Tabu—Musical Parade (17 m.)....Apr. 13  
 FF4-5 Boogie Woogie—Musical Parade (17 m.)..June 15  
 FF4-6 You Hit the Spot—Musical Parade (17 m.)..Aug. 17  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Republic—Two Reels**

- 482 Manhunt of Mystery Island—Bailey-Stirling  
 (15 episodes).....Mar. 17  
 483 Federal Operator 99 (12 episodes) Lamont-  
 Talbot.....July 7  
 484 Purple Monster Strikes—Morgan-Stirling  
 (15 episodes).....Sept. 29  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**RKO—One Reel**

- 54108 Dog Watch—Disney (7 m.).....Mar. 16  
 54206 Flicker Flashbacks No. 6 (8 m.).....Apr. 13  
 54309 Timber Doodles—Sportscope (8 m.).....Apr. 20  
 54110 African Diary—Disney (7 m.).....Apr. 20  
 54111 Donald's Crime—Disney (7 m.).....May 11  
 54310 West Point Winners—Sportscope (7½m.)..May 18  
 54207 Flicker Flashbacks No. 7 (7½m.).....May 25  
 54311 Tee Tricks—Sportscope (8m.).....June 15  
 54312 Mexican Playland—Sportscope (9m.).....July 13  
 54112 Californy 'Er Bust—Disney (7m.).....July 13  
 54113 Canine Casanova—Disney (7m.).....July 27

**RKO—Two Reels**

- 53106 Guam-Salvaged Island—This is America  
 (17 min.).....Apr. 13  
 53107 Dress Parade—This Is America (16 m.)...May 4  
 53704 Let's Go Stepping—Leon Errol (17 m.)....May 4  
 53108 Battle of Supply—This is America (18 m.)..June 1  
 53705 It Shouldn't Happen to a Dog—  
 Errol (18 min.).....June 15  
 53109 China Lifeline—This is America (16m.)...June 29  
 53404 What, No Cigarettes?—E. Kennedy (18m.)..July 13

**Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel**

- 5259 Isle of Romance—Adventure (8 m.).....May 4  
 5516 Mother Goose Nightmare—Terrytoon  
 (7 m.).....May 11  
 5517 Smoky Joe—Terrytoon (7 m.).....May 25  
 5354 Down the Fairway—Sports (8 m.).....June 1  
 5518 The Silver Streak—Terrytoon (7 min.)....June 8  
 5902 Do You Remember?—Lew Lahr (8 m.)  
 (formerly "Good Old Days").....June 22  
 5519 Aesops Fable—The Mosquito—Terrytoon  
 (7 m.).....June 29  
 5201 What it Takes to Make a Star—Adventure  
 (formerly "Modeling for Money") (8 m.)..July 6  
 5520 Mighty Mouse & the Wolf—Terry. (7 m.)...July 20  
 5261 The Empire State—Adventure (8 m.).....July 27  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)  
 (Continued on last page)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 6501 Mighty Mouse in Gypsy Life—Terry. (6m.) Aug. 3  
 6251 Memories of Columbus—Adventure ..... Aug. 17  
 6502 Aesop's Fable—The Fox & the Duck—Terry. Aug. 24  
 6252 Magic of Youth—Adventure ..... Aug. 31  
 6503 Swooning the Swooners—Terrytoon ..... Sept. 14  
 6351 Ski Aces—Sports ..... Sept. 21  
 6504 Aesop's Fable—The Watch Dog—Terry.... Sept. 28  
 6253 China Carries On—Adventure ..... Oct. 12

**Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels**

- Vol. 11 No. 9—The Returning Veteran—March of Time (18 min.) ..... Apr. 20  
 Vol. 11 No. 10—Spotlight on Congress—March of Time (16 m.) ..... May 18  
 Vol. 11 No. 11—Teen Age Girls—March of Time (17 m.) ..... June 15  
 Vol. 11 No. 12—Where's the Meat?—March of Time (17 min.) ..... July 13  
 Vol. 11 No. 13—The New U. S. Frontier—March of Time (17 min.) ..... Aug. 10  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Universal—One Reel**

- 9355 Your National Gallery—Var. Views (9 m.) Apr. 23  
 9238 Woody Dines Out—Cartune (7 m.) ..... May 14  
 9375 Author in Babyland—Per. Odd. (9 m.) ..... May 14  
 9376 Broadway Farmer—Per. Odd. (9 m.) ..... May 28  
 9356 Wingmen of Tomorrow—Var. Views (9 m.) June 4  
 9238 Crow Crazy—Cartune (7 m.) ..... July 9  
 9357 Victory Bound—Var. Views (9m.) ..... Aug. 6  
 9317 School for Mermaids—Per. Odd. (9m.) ..... Aug. 13  
 9358 Village of the Past—Var. Views (9m.) ..... Aug. 20  
 9378 Kanine Aristocrats—Per. Odd. (9m.) ..... Aug. 27  
 9240 Dippy Diplomats—Cartune (7m.) ..... Aug. 27  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Universal—Two Reels**

- 9881 The Master Key—Stone Wiley (13 episodes) ..... Apr. 24  
 9127 Rockabye Rhythm—Musical (15 m.) ..... June 20  
 9128 Artistry in Rhythm—Musical (15 m.) ..... July 18  
 1581 Secret Agent X-9—13 episodes ..... July 24  
 9129 Waikiki Melody—Musical (15 m.) ..... Aug. 29  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Vitaphone—One Reel**

- 1723 Hare Trigger—Bugs Bunny (7 m.) ..... May 5  
 1608 Circus Band—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) ..... May 5  
 1507 Water Babies—Sports (10 m.) ..... May 19  
 1705 Ain't that Ducky—Looney Tune (7 m.) ..... May 19  
 1405 Overseas Roundup No. 2—Varieties (10 m.) May 26  
 1706 Gruesome Twosome—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.) June 9  
 1508 Mexican Sea Sports—Sports (10 m.) (re.) June 9  
 1609 Bands Across the Sea—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) June 22  
 1509 Bahama Sea Sports—Sports (10 m.) (re.) June 23  
 1510 Flivver Flying—Sports (10 m.) ..... June 30  
 1707 Tale of Two Mice—Looney Tune (7 m.) ..... June 30  
 1406 Overseas Roundup No. 3—Varieties (10 m.) July 14  
 1610 Yankee Doodle Daughters—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) ..... July 21  
 1311 Speakin' of the Weather—Hit. Par. (7 m.) ..... July 21  
 1708 Wagon Wheels—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) ..... July 28  
 1310 I'm a Little Big Shot Now—Hit. Par. (7 m.) Aug. 4  
 1724 Hare Conditioned—Bugs Bunny (7 m.) ..... Aug. 11  
 1709 Fresh Airedale—Looney Tune (7 m.) ..... Aug. 25  
 1312 Old Glory—Hit. Par. (7 m.) ..... Aug. 25  
 1710 Bashful Buzzard—Looney Tune (7 m.) ..... Sept. 15  
 1711 Peck Up Your Troubles—L. Tune (7 m.) ..... Sept. 22  
 1311 Busy Bakers—Hit. Par. (7 m.) ..... Sept. 22  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 2402 Miracle Makers—Varieties (10 m.) ..... Sept. 1  
 2501 Sports Go to War—Sports Par. (10 m.) ..... Sept. 1  
 2601 Spade Cooley Band—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) ..... Sept. 15  
 2401 Alice in Jungleland—Var. (10 m.) ..... Sept. 22  
 2602 Here Comes the Navy Bands—Melody Masters (10 min.) ..... Sept. 29

**Vitaphone—Two Reels**

- 1111 Plantation Melodies—Featurette (20 m.) ... May 12  
 1104 Coney Island Honeymoon—Special (20 m.) June 16  
 1112 Learn and Live—Featurette (20 m.) ..... July 7  
 1005 America the Beautiful—Special (20 m.) .... Aug. 4  
 1006 Orders from Tokyo—Special (20 m.) ..... Aug. 18  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 2101 Barber Shop Ballads—Featurette (20 m.) .. Sept. 8

**NEWSWEEKLY****NEW YORK****RELEASE DATES****Pathe News**

- 551103 Sat. (O) ... Aug. 18  
 552104 Wed. (E) Aug. 22  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 65101 Sat. (O) ... Aug. 25  
 65202 Wed. (E) Aug. 29  
 65103 Sat. (O) .. Sept. 1  
 65204 Wed. (E) Sept. 5  
 65105 Sat. (O) .. Sept. 8  
 65206 Wed. (E) Sept. 12  
 65107 Sat. (O) .. Sept. 15  
 65208 Wed. (E) Sept. 19  
 65109 Sat. (O) .. Sept. 22  
 65210 Wed. (E) Sept. 26  
 65111 Sat. (O) .. Sept. 29  
 65212 Wed. (O) Oct. 3

**Metrotone News**

- 298 Thurs. (E) ... Aug. 16  
 299 Tues. (O) ... Aug. 21  
 300 Thurs. (E) .. Aug. 23  
 301 Tues. (O) ... Aug. 28  
 302 Thurs. (E) .. Aug. 30  
 303 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 4  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 200 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 6  
 201 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 11  
 202 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 13  
 203 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 18  
 204 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 20  
 205 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 25  
 206 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 27  
 207 Tues. (O) ... Oct. 2  
 208 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 4

**Universal**

- 424 Thurs. (E) ... Aug. 16  
 425 Tues. (O) ... Aug. 21  
 426 Thurs. (E) .. Aug. 23  
 427 Tues. (O) ... Aug. 28  
 428 Thurs. (E) .. Aug. 30  
 429 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 4  
 430 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 6  
 431 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 11  
 432 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 13  
 433 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 18  
 434 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 20  
 435 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 25  
 436 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 27  
 437 Tues. (O) ... Oct. 2  
 438 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 4

**Paramount News**

- 100 Thurs. (E) ... Aug. 16  
 101 Sunday (O) Aug. 19  
 102 Thurs. (E) .. Aug. 23  
 103 Sunday (O) Aug. 26  
 104 Thurs. (E) .. Aug. 30  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 1 Sunday (O) .. Sept. 2  
 2 Thurs. (E) ... Sept. 6  
 3 Sunday (O) .. Sept. 9  
 4 Thurs. (E) ... Sept. 13  
 5 Sunday (O) .. Sept. 16  
 6 Thurs. (E) ... Sept. 20  
 7 Sunday (O) .. Sept. 23  
 8 Thurs. (E) ... Sept. 27  
 9 Sunday (O) .. Sept. 30  
 10 Thurs. (E) ... Oct. 4

**Fox Movietone**

- 100 Thurs. (E) ... Aug. 16  
 101 Tues. (O) ... Aug. 21  
 102 Thurs. (E) .. Aug. 23  
 103 Tues. (O) ... Aug. 28  
 104 Thurs. (E) .. Aug. 30  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 1 Tues. (O) .... Sept. 4  
 2 Thurs. (E) ... Sept. 6  
 3 Tues. (O) .... Sept. 11  
 4 Thurs. (E) ... Sept. 13  
 5 Tues. (O) .... Sept. 18  
 6 Thurs. (E) ... Sept. 20  
 7 Tues. (O) .... Sept. 25  
 8 Thurs. (E) ... Sept. 27  
 9 Tues. (O) .... Oct. 2  
 10 Thurs. (E) ... Oct. 4

**All American News**

- 147 Friday ..... Aug. 17  
 148 Friday ..... Aug. 24  
 149 Friday ..... Aug. 31  
 150 Friday ..... Sept. 7  
 151 Friday ..... Sept. 14  
 152 Friday ..... Sept. 21  
 153 Friday ..... Sept. 28  
 154 Friday ..... Oct. 5



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

## Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....	\$15.00
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35c a Copy	

1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 1945

No. 34

### A Guide to Columbia's 1945-46 Product

It has long been an accepted practice in the motion picture industry for the eleven producer-distributor companies to announce, prior to the opening of each new season, the number of pictures they planned to produce and distribute. At the same time, still following this practice, they have announced also the names of the stars, producer and director to be connected with each picture. Moreover, in most cases, each picture was described briefly as to its type.

Invariably, this information was given to the trade press for publication, because the companies were just as eager to publicize their forthcoming product as the exhibitors were to learn about it. Moreover, most of the companies bombarded the exhibitors with fancy brochures and other literature descriptive of their new season's product, in order to prepare them for the salesmen's visits.

For the 1945-46 season, nine of the eleven companies have already announced their production and distribution plans. Universal and Columbia have not.

Universal, which is in the midst of a series of regional sales meetings, expects to have its announcement ready within a few days.

Columbia, however, with an evasiveness that has frequently marked its dealings with the exhibitors, will not commit itself on whether or not an announcement of its 1945-46 program will be made. Neither this trade paper, nor, to the best of our knowledge, any other trade paper, has been able to get any information from Columbia regarding its plans for the forthcoming season.

Ordinarily, HARRISON'S REPORTS would not become alarmed over a company's delay in making an announcement of its new season's product, for the conditions that may cause the delay are numerous and understandable. But when that company adopts an attitude of stubborn silence about its delay, one is bound to become uneasy. And when, to top it off, the company in question is Columbia, there is indeed cause for alarm. Experience has taught that when Columbia, with its "elastic thinking" policy, which enables it to promise much and deliver little, deviates from an accepted practice, one should examine carefully into the possible reasons for the deviation.

Delving into the possible motives Columbia might have for withholding its product announcement, this paper, through sources that have proved reliable in the past, has come across some interesting information, which it would like to pass on to its readers for whatever value it may have in helping them to determine just how to deal with Columbia.

According to this paper's informants, Columbia has no intention of announcing for publication the list of pictures that will comprise its 1945-46 program, nor does it intend to follow the accepted practice of sending the exhibitors brochures outlining the pictures it hopes to produce and distribute. These same informants advise that Columbia has printed a limited number of what might be called brochures or sales manuals, which have been distributed to its sales forces for showing to prospective customers when negotiat-

ing for a deal. The salesmen have been instructed specifically to keep these brochures or sales manuals in their possession at all times. Under no circumstance are they to leave one with a customer.

Our informants advise further that the Columbia salesmen have been selling their company's 1945-46 program for the past two months, making known to the exhibitors the information contained in the manuals, but leaving them with no evidence of what the company promises to deliver.

HARRISON'S REPORTS does not know how many exhibitors, guided by nothing more than the glib promises of a salesman, who has been instructed to leave no evidence of his promises, have thus far signed with Columbia for the new season. That some of them have signed contracts, this paper has no doubt. We are inclined to believe, however, that those who did sign were motivated, not by the faith they had in Columbia's way of doing business, but by the scarcity of product that has existed up to this time, and by some unique elements in their competitive situations, which compelled them to renew their franchises for better or for worse. Columbia, being in the driver's seat in such situations, probably knew that it would have little difficulty inducing such exhibitors to sign contracts. Whether or not it will be as successful with other exhibitors remains to be seen, particularly since scarcity of product may soon be a thing of the past in view of the Government's lifting of raw film stock restrictions.

Perhaps the sudden change in conditions will impel Columbia to revert to the accepted practice of publicizing its new season's plans. In the event it holds fast to a hush-hush policy, however, every potential customer should put the following questions to the Columbia salesmen and demand a satisfactory answer before concluding a deal:

1. Why has Columbia elected to follow a policy of secrecy in connection with its new season's plans?
2. Why is it taking precautions to see that neither the exhibitors nor the trade publications are furnished with official information regarding the new product?
3. Does the new program include pictures that were promised to customers of previous seasons but not delivered, and, if such is the case, does Columbia fear that a few of the trade papers and exhibitor organizations may publicize the fact that these pictures are being offered for the second or third time?
4. Is Columbia afraid to go on record because it does not hope to deliver what it is promising?
5. Or, is it a fact that, from the viewpoint of story, production, and star values, Columbia has so little to offer that the less said about the program the better?

Until Columbia sees fit to come forward with an announcement of its new product, HARRISON'S REPORTS, intends to keep its subscribers posted with respect to the 1945-46 pictures Columbia has completed, as well as the pictures that are in work or in preparation. This paper will also give its opinion of each picture's potential box-office worth, based on

(Continued on last page)

**"State Fair" with Jeanne Crain, Dana Andrews, Dick Haymes and Vivian Blaine**  
(20th Century-Fox, October; time, 100 min.)

Enhanced by the charming, tuneful music of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, and by the gorgeous Technicolor photography, this remake of "State Fair," which was produced originally by Fox in 1933, is a very good entertainment; it should please all types of audiences. The story remains substantially the same, it being a homely, human, sentimental type, with a rural background. The romantic interest is pleasant, and the comedy situations amusing. Most of the action takes place at a state fair, and the side shows, the masses of people, the friendly rivalry amongst the farmers for blue ribbon prizes for their live stock, and the general carnival spirit, have been reproduced with such care and with such lavishness that the film is at all times colorful and exciting. There is even a romance between a boar and a sow to add to the fun. It is good, wholesome entertainment, capably directed and well acted.

The story revolves around Charles Winninger, a farmer, Fay Bainter, his wife, and their children, Dick Haymes and Jeanne Crain. All looked forward to the opening of the state fair. Winninger concerned himself chiefly with his 880-lb. prize boar, which he hoped would win a blue ribbon; his wife busied herself preparing brandied mincemeat for the domestic arts exhibit; and the children dreamt of finding romance at the fair. On the first day at the fair, Jeanne meets and falls in love with Dana Andrews, a newspaperman, and Haymes becomes infatuated with Vivian Blaine, a singer with an orchestra. The rest of the week concerns itself with the romancing of both couples, and with the winning of prizes by Miss Bainter for her foodstuffs, and by Winninger for his massive boar. On the final day of the fair, Haymes learns that Vivian could not marry him because she had a husband from whom she was separated, and Jeanne finds her romance brought to an abrupt halt when Andrews' publisher hurries him off to Chicago on an assignment without giving him a chance to explain his departure. Disconsolate, Jeanne and Haymes accompany their tired parents home. Jeanne, her thoughts constantly with Andrews, avoids Phil Brown, her farmer suitor. But happiness reigns once again with all the family when Andrews comes to the farm unexpectedly to claim Jeanne as his bride, and when Haymes, overcoming his infatuation for Vivian, renews his romance with a neighboring farm girl.

Oscar Hammerstein II wrote the screen play from the novel by Phil Strong, William Perlberg produced it, and Walter Lang directed it. The cast includes Donald Meek, Percy Kilbride, Frank McHugh, Henry Morgan and others.

**"Paris Underground" with Constance Bennett and Gracie Fields**

(United Artists, September 13; time, 97 min.)

A fair picture of its type, but its box-office worth is questionable since stories dealing with "underground" activities are somewhat outmoded at this time. Its chief drawback is the fact that it is too draggy in some spots, particularly in the first half; it takes too much time in establishing the story. It becomes more interesting as the story develops, but every now and

then the action is impeded by excessive dialogue. Suspense is sustained fairly well in the second half because of the risks taken by the heroines in spiritedly downed British aviators out of France. Another drawback is the poorly edited finish, where the heroines, apprehended, jailed, and tortured by the Nazis, are rescued suddenly by a detachment of American soldiers; the appearance of these liberators is totally unexpected, and somewhat ludicrous, since there is nothing in the preceding action to indicate that Allied forces were fighting on French soil, thus preparing the spectator for the possibility of a rescue. On the whole, the picture's ninety-seven minutes running time is much too long for the story it has to tell:—

Constance Bennett, an American woman estranged from her French husband (Paul Rigaud), and Gracie Fields, her British companion, unsuccessfully try to flee Paris when the Germans gain control of the city. Turned back on the outskirts of Paris, they stop their car at an inn owned by a friend, where they find a wounded RAF flyer in hiding. They smuggle the flyer back to their Paris apartment, and offer to help him find a means of escape. Their efforts eventually put them in touch with the French "underground," and they succeed in smuggling the young man across the border to unoccupied France. Pleased with their success, and eager to do their part in the fight against Nazism, both women dedicate themselves to the task of helping other hapless Allied flyers to escape. Their perilous work leads them through a series of dangerous adventures and, after numerous close brushes with the Gestapo, both are caught by the Nazis and sentenced to hard labor for life. Months later, when the Allied forces liberate France, both women are found in a filthy, medieval prison, starved and almost out of their minds. Nursed back to health, each is duly honored for her patriotic endeavors.

Boris Ingster and Gertrude Purcell wrote the screen play, Miss Bennett produced it, and Gregory Ratoff directed it. The cast includes Kurt Kruger, Leslie Vincent, Charles Andre and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"The Fatal Witness" with Evelyn Ankers and Richard Fraser**

(Republic, no release date set; time, 59 min.)

A passable program murder melodrama, with a plot that is developed logically and fairly interestingly until the finish, where it veers to the supernatural for what is apparently meant to be a surprise ending; however, it makes no sense. The first half is somewhat mystifying since the murderer's identity is concealed, but once his identity is established in the second half the spectator's interest lies in the manner in which the hero, a detective, tricks him into confessing. The action is liesurely, and it lacks the excitement generally found in pictures of this type. The romance is pleasant but mild. The story's locale is London, and the production values are pretty good:—

On the morning following a quarrel with George Leigh, her irresponsible nephew and sole heir, Barbara Everest, an elderly Englishwoman, is found strangled to death. Scotland Yard Inspector Richard Fraser questions Evelyn Ankers, the dead woman's secretary-companion, about the events preceding the murder, and he becomes convinced that Leigh had committed the crime, despite Evelyn's insistence that he was innocent. Leigh establishes an alibi by proving



that he was in jail at the time of the murder, but he fails to allay Fraser's suspicions. Actually, Leigh had bribed his jailer (Barry Bernard) to free him for one hour, long enough to return home, strangle his aunt, and return to jail to establish his alibi. While Fraser persistently continues his investigation, Leigh finds himself blackmailed by the jailer. He murders the man, taking pains to once again establish an alibi. Fraser, however, aided by Evelyn, comes across evidence indicating that Leigh had committed both crimes. Lacking proof, Fraser, recalling that Leigh was unusually superstitious, determines to trick him into a confession. He arranges for an actress to play Miss Everest's ghost at a dinner party in Leigh's home, and cautions the guests to pretend that they do not see the "ghost" as it hovers over Leigh. When the "ghost" appears, and the guests pretend not to see it, Leigh becomes unnerved and confesses. Fraser turns to congratulate the actress only to find that she had disappeared. He learns that the actress, ill at home, had not been present, and realizes that Miss Everest's ghost had actually visited the party.

Jerry Sackheim wrote the screen play, Rudolph E. Abel produced it, and Lesley Selander directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Abbott and Costello in Hollywood"**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 84 min.)

This latest Abbott and Costello comedy, the final one to be made on the MGM lot, should more than satisfy those who respond easily to their particular brand of slapstick humor. As is usually the case with comedies featuring this pair, the story is completely nonsensical, but there are enough laughs in this one to keep one amused throughout. Some of the situations should provoke hilarious laughter; as, for instance, the one in which Costello, after "crashing" a studio gate, is mistaken for a dummy on a movie set and is given a terrific mauling by the studio workers. Another hilarious sequence is the one in which Costello battles the villain during a wild ride on a roller coaster. Some music and dancing are woven into the plot, but it does not retard the action:—

Bud Abbott and Lou Costello, barber and porter, respectively, in a Hollywood tonsorioral parlor, are sent to the office of Warner Anderson, an actors' agent, to give him a haircut and a shine. While performing their duties, the boys overhear Anderson offer Bob Stanton, an unknown singer, a leading role that had been refused by Carleton Young, a fading star. Later, Young informs Anderson that he had decided to accept the role, and orders him to dispose of Stanton. Abbott and Costello, impressed by the lucrative deals Anderson made as an agent, decide to become agents themselves, and they induce Stanton to become their first client. The boys determine to obtain for Stanton the leading role Anderson had offered him. They drive to the studio to see Donald McBride, the picture's producer, only to antagonize him by crashing into his new car. McBride orders the studio police to keep them off the lot. Undeterred, the boys crash the gate. This leads to a riotous chase. Meanwhile Young once again declines the leading role, and McBride offers to sign Stanton, but the young singer refuses to negotiate without his agents' approval. By the time Abbott and Costello are found, Young stops the deal by accepting the role once again. Determined to clinch the deal for Stanton, the boys decide to get rid of Young. Their

plan leads them into a series of wild complications, during which Abbott leads Young to believe that he had murdered Costello. In the interim, however, the picture is filmed with Stanton in the lead.

Nat Perrin and Lou Breslow wrote the screen play, Martin M. Gosch produced it, and S. Sylvan Simon directed it. The cast includes Frances Rafferty, Jean Porter, "Rags" Raglund and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Love Letters" with Jennifer Jones and Joseph Cotten**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 99 min.)

Fairly good. It is a strong romantic drama, with a particular appeal for women. The story, which concerns itself with the unusual romance between an honorably discharged British officer and his best friend's widow, an amnesia victim, is slow-moving and somewhat involved, and at times not too convincing, but it manages to hold one's attention throughout, mainly because of the fine performances. A number of the situations are warm and appealing, and others are strongly emotional. The main characters are sympathetic, and the love the hero and heroine have for each other is so genuine that one is moved deeply by their unhappiness. The direction is intelligent, and the settings are good:—

As a favor to Robert Sully, a gay, irresponsible fellow officer in Italy, Joseph Cotten reluctantly writes beautiful love letters to Jennifer Jones, a girl in England, signing Sully's name to them. Sully, granted leave, returns to England and marries Jennifer, who believed him to be the author of the letters. Months later, Cotten, wounded, returns to England to recuperate. There he learns that Sully had been murdered under mysterious circumstances. Cotten meets Jennifer at a house party and learns that she was an amnesia victim, the result of her husband's murder. Checking through newspaper files, he learns that her marriage to Sully had been an unhappy one, and that Sully had been stabbed to death while in a drunken mood, during which he had tried to beat Jennifer. The shock had caused her to lose her memory, and because she could not testify in her own behalf she had been sentenced to a one year prison term for manslaughter. The only other witness to the murder had been Gladys Cooper, her foster mother, but a paralytic stroke suffered at the time of the murder had left her speechless. Cotten and Jennifer fall in love. He marries her, fully realizing that she might one day regain her memory, and that her love might turn to hate when she learns that he had written the love letters that had brought tragedy into her life. They lead an idyllic life together, but different incidents soon cause Jennifer's amnesia to recede. She eventually regains her full memory, but is disturbed by her inability to recall if she had stabbed her husband. Her foster mother, who had by this time regained her speech, confesses that she had stabbed Sully to death to stop him from beating Jennifer. Her innocence proved, Jennifer looks forward to a happy life with the man whose love letters she held dear.

Ayn Rand wrote the screen play from the novel by Chris Massie, William Dieterle directed it, and Hal Wallis produced it. The cast includes Ann Richards, Anita Louise, Cecil Kellaway and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

the drawing power of the players and the past performances of the producer and the director, so that those of you who may contemplate buying Columbia pictures will have some information as a guide. The 1945-46 Columbia production schedule to date (westerns excluded) is as follows:

#### COMPLETED OR SHOOTING

**TARS AND SPARS**, a musical based on the Coast Guard stage show of the same title. Alfred Drake, Janet Blair, and Marc Platt head the cast. Alfred E. Green is the director. It should turn out from fair to fairly good in box-office worth, depending on whether the story, which has a war background, is revised sufficiently.

**HAIL THE CHIEF**, a comedy dealing with railroad life. Marguerite Chapman, Willard Parker, Janis Carter and Chester Morris are the featured players. Burt Kelly is the producer, and Ray Enright the director. This should turn out to be a secondary feature with just fair box-office results.

**HIT THE HAY**, a comedy featuring Judy Canova and Ross Hunter. Ted Richmond is the producer and Del Lord the director. This will probably appeal chiefly to the Judy Canova fans and, as such, rates lower-half billing. Box-office returns should be from poor to fair.

**SONG OF BROADWAY**, a musical featuring Marjorie Reynolds, Fred Brady, and Jinx Falkenburg. Burt Kelly is the producer, and Leigh Jason, the director. This, too, will probably end up as the lower half of a double bill, with average box-office results.

**PRISON SHIP**, a melodrama dealing with American prisoners on a Japanese ship. The cast includes Nina Foch and Robert Lowery. Alexis Thurn-Taxis is the producer, and Arthur Driefus, the director. Another lower-half program picture of doubtful box-office value since its theme is related to the war.

**BANDIT OF SHERWOOD FOREST**, a legendary melodrama in Technicolor, dealing with Robin Hood's rescue of the boy-King of England, whose death is plotted by a tyrannical Regent. Cornel Wilde, Anita Louise, and Edgar Buchanan head the cast. Leonard Picker and Clifford Sanforth are the producers, and Henry Levin, the director. This should do from fair to good business in theatres where children and adult action-fans make up a large part of the audience.

**PARDON MY PAST**, a comedy drama, revolving around the misadventures of a discharged serviceman, who is mistaken for a notorious playboy. Fred MacMurray and Marguerite Chapman head the cast. Leslie Fenton is the producer-director. It may do fairly good business on the strength of MacMurray's popularity.

**GIRL OF THE LIMBERLOST**, a drama, based on the novel by Gene Stratton Porter. It is a remake, having been produced twice before—by Film Booking Offices in 1924, and by Monogram in 1934. The cast includes Dorinda Clifton, Ruth Nelson, Vanessa Brown, and Warren Miller. Alexis Thurn-Taxis is the producer, and Mel Ferrer, the director. Properly treated, the story should turn out entertaining, but since it has been produced on a modest budget, and since the cast lacks marquee strength, it will probably end up as the lower-half of a double bill with only moderate box-office returns.

**CRIME DOCTOR'S WARNING**, a mystery melodrama, fifth of the series, starring Warner Baxter. Rudolph Fluthow is the producer, and William Castle, the director. It should go over wherever the series is liked, with average box-office results.

**RENEGADES**, a Technicolor western, featuring Evelyn Keyes, Willard Parker, and Larry Parks. Michel Kraike is the producer, and George Sherman the director. Although weak on star values, it may do fairly well wherever pictures of this type are enjoyed.

**SNAFU**, a farce-comedy, based on the Broadway stage play of the same title. As a play, it received mixed reviews, with the *New York Times* critic stating that it "is a variation on 'Kiss and Tell' and the others, although it is not as good as most of them." The cast includes Nanette Parks, Conrad Janis, Jimmy Lloyd, and Robert Benchley. Jack Moss is the producer-director. Since no one in the cast means anything at the box-office, the picture will have to depend on its title, but in view of the fact that the word "Snafu" is military slang of coded obscenity, known to many people, its box-office value is questionable, particularly if Parent-Teacher groups raise objections to it.

**WOMAN IN RED**, a psychological melodrama, featuring Nina Foch and George Macready. Wallace MacDonald is the producer, and John H. Lewis, the director. It should turn out to be just another supporting feature, with from poor to fair box-office results.

**VOICE OF THE WHISTLER**, a psychological melodrama, fourth of the series starring Richard Dix. Rudolph Fluthow is the producer, and William Castle, the director. It should serve as a fair supporting feature, with average box-office results.

#### IN PREPARATION

**GILDA**, a drama dealing with a gangster's widow, who is kept on the straight and narrow path by one of his former henchmen. The picture stars Rita Hayworth, this being her first straight dramatic part. Charles Vidor will direct. The possibilities of a Rita Hayworth picture without music is difficult to forecast, but on the basis of her popularity the picture should do fairly well.

**LIFE WITH BLONDIE**, a domestic comedy, with Penny Singleton and Arthur Lake. Burt Kelly is the producer, and Abby Berlin, the director. It should get by as a supporting feature wherever the series is liked, doing average business.

The foregoing list of pictures adds up to a total of fifteen, or more than one-third of the total pictures one may expect Columbia to deliver on its 1945-46 program, western melodramas excluded.

An examination of this list as to box-office possibilities leaves one with the impression that Columbia has little to brag about. Perhaps that is why it has decided to do away with the usual "ballyhoo" that has marked the announcement of its product in seasons past.

One more proposed Columbia picture this paper would like to say something about is "Jacobowsky and the Colonel," which is to be based on the successful Broadway play of the same title. According to reports in the trade press, Mr. Sidney Buchman is now making plans for its production. If the Columbia salesman promises to deliver this picture as part of the 1945-46 program, insist that he put that promise in writing in the contract. Otherwise, if the picture should turn out good, you should not be surprised if Columbia takes it away from you and sells it separate and apart from any program, a cute little trick it used on its customers with both "Kiss and Tell" and "A Song to Remember."

At the beginning of the 1944-45 season, Columbia followed the accepted practice of announcing its proposed program. Now that the season is drawing to a close, we find that Columbia will deliver to its 1944-45 contract-holders only thirty-six out of a promised forty-four pictures. Of these forty-four, Columbia promised that twenty would be top-bracket films. The record shows, however, that it will finish the season with only fourteen pictures allocated to the top-twenty brackets (six will not be delivered). And eight of these fourteen, although designated as top pictures, have played circuit houses as the lower-half of double-bills.

This is Columbia's record of performance following an announcement of its proposed program. What then may we expect from Columbia during the 1945-46 season, when it refuses to give even an inkling of what its proposed program will be?



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Australia, New Zealand,	
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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1945

No. 35

### THEY TALK OF SETTLEMENT

Attorneys for the major companies met last week (Friday) in Washington with U. S. Attorney General Tom C. Clark and with Assistant Attorney General Wendell Berge, head of the Department of Justice's anti-trust division, to discuss problems incident to the trying of the New York anti-trust case on October 8.

Reporting on this meeting, *Film Daily's* Washington correspondent states that the industry representatives inquired of Clark about the possibilities for writing a new decree. Clark is reported to have replied that he had not given a new decree any thought, and that he was too busy preparing to try the case. When the distributors' attorneys asked him what his main objective was, Clark is said to have replied, "Divestiture."

*Film Daily* reports further that the possibility of a new decree has not been ruled out since the defense attorneys have been invited by Berge to discuss their ideas for a new decree with one of the anti-trust division's representatives. This invitation has not yet been accepted.

"Clark and Berge," adds the report, "were told by industry counsel that failing agreement on a new decree, litigation on the case against the majors will take 'from one to five years.' Berge replied that he thinks the chances are excellent that the whole case can be settled in a relatively short time—far sooner than five years."

It is apparent that, as the date for the New York anti-trust trial draws near, the major companies are becoming cognizant of their perilous position. It comes, therefore, as no surprise to informed industryites that they should make a final desperate attempt to call off the case in its entirety. In all probability, they will try once again to get together with the Department of Justice to work out a new decree, and it can be expected that they may offer even more concessions than they have offered heretofore. But you may be sure that they will make no concessions as regards divorcement from their theatre holdings, or that they will agree to any measures that may seriously endanger the power and privileges they now enjoy under their monopoly.

No doubt great pressure will be brought to bear against the Attorney General to make a settlement, but thus far there has been no indication that Clark

intends to yield any ground, particularly in the matter of divorcement. As a matter of record, the Department of Justice, ever since it instituted the anti-trust action against the majors in 1939, has repeatedly contended that complete separation of the defendants' theatre operating business from their production and distribution activities was the only remedy needed to drive out monopolistic practices from the motion picture industry. Tom Clark, in his former capacity as assistant attorney general in charge of the anti-trust division, and in his present capacity as U. S. Attorney General, has frequently subscribed to this view. It would, therefore, be an unwarranted reflection on Clark for anyone to suppose that, at this late date, he would "back-track" on his utterances and agree to a compromise that would leave the producer-distributors in possession and control of their theatre interests.

Now, more than ever, is the time for the independent exhibitors to make known their feelings against monopolistic practices. Don't sit back and wait for the outcome of the forthcoming trial, feeling assured that all will be well. The Department of Justice has carried on and is still carrying on a valiant fight for your right to equal freedom of economic opportunity, and if it is to succeed it must have plentiful information as to the abuses the producer-distributors have practiced on you over a period of years. Such information can be furnished only by you, the independent theatre owners. And unless every one of you cooperates with the Department and gives it courage to continue the fight, no matter how great a pressure the producer-distributor interests bring to bear on it, your chance to shatter the chains that have bound you for so many years may be lost.

Every thoughtful exhibitor realizes that so long as the producer-distributors have a penny invested in theatres they will always have the incentive to grant special favors to these theatres and to discriminate against the independent theatres. The only way to restore free competition in our industry is to deprive the producer-distributors of their ready-made market, so that they will have to resort to honest competition among themselves for playing time. Only then will every independent exhibitor be regarded and treated as a prospective customer instead of as a rival. Moreover, a free competitive market will make for better pictures, and it will also serve to induce additional producers to enter the field.

**"Isle of the Dead" with Boris Karloff,  
Ellen Drew and Marc Cramer**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 71 min.)

A fairly good program melodrama. It belongs in the horror class of entertainment, and patrons with strong nerves who go in for pictures of this type should find it fairly exciting, for the story is weird and the suspense is sustained all the way through. Some of the action will bring gasps from the audience. As is usual in pictures of this sort, it has an eerie atmosphere, most of the action taking place on a lonely island off the coast of Greece in a dimly lit, creepy looking house. The closing scenes, where a demented woman stabs two persons to death with a trident (a three-pronged fork), are so gruesome that they make the picture unsuitable for children. The action takes place during the Balkan War of 1912:—

Accompanied by Marc Cramer, an American newspaperman, Boris Karloff, an iron-willed Greek general, visits his wife's tomb on a tiny island off the Greek mainland only to discover the body missing. They start a search for the violators and come across a house occupied by Jason Robards, a Swiss antique collector, and by Helene Thimig, his housekeeper, a superstitious old Greek woman. Inhabiting the household also as guests were Alan Napier, a British Consul; Katherine Emery, his wife; Skelton Knaggs, a Cockney salesman; and Ellen Drew, a Greek girl, who was Miss Emery's devoted companion and nurse. The general learns that unscrupulous natives had been robbing the graves, but the superstitious housekeeper blames it on "vampires." Karloff and Cramer spend the night at the house. In the morning, the Cockney salesman is found dead from an island plague. The general quarantines the house and directs that all, including himself, must remain on the island lest the disease spread to his armies. The British Consul is next to die, and the housekeeper, discounting the plague, accuses Ellen of being a "vampire" and blames the deaths on her. The others express their contempt for her ancient superstitions. Soon after, Miss Emery falls into a cataleptic trance, is pronounced dead and put into a coffin. When the general himself is stricken, he gives credence to the housekeeper's superstitions and, in the interest of those still living, resolves to kill Ellen. Meanwhile Miss Emery regains consciousness and escapes from the coffin. Delirious with plague and fearful for Ellen's safety, she seizes an old brass trident and kills both the general and the housekeeper as they prepare to dispose of Ellen. Miss Emery then throws herself over a cliff. On the following morning, a strong wind blows away the plague, and Ellen and Cramer leave the island to start life anew.

Ardel Wray and Josef Mischel wrote the screen play, Val Lewton produced it, and Mark Robson directed it. Jack J. Gross was executive producer.

Adult entertainment.

**"The Gay Senorita"  
with Jinx Falkenburg and Jim Bannon**

(Columbia, August 9; time, 70 min.)

Routine program fare, the sort that will serve to round out the lower half of a double bill wherever something light is needed. If your patrons enjoy Latin-American music and dances, they should find it a pleasant hour's entertainment, the kind one forgets soon after leaving the theatre. As a matter of fact, the music and dancing are its main attractions, for the

story is trite and its treatment unimaginative, causing one's interest to lag. Not much can be said for either the direction or the acting, which is uninspired. The production values are modest:—

Thurston Hall, a wealthy contractor, plans to build a huge warehouse in the Mexican quarter of a large California city, but Marguerita Sylva, leader of the Mexican people in the district, plans to rebuild the quarter with gay shops and cafes as a monument to the spirit of the early Mexicans. She urges her people to refuse to sell their properties to Hall, and then, accompanied by Jinx Falkenburg, her granddaughter, visits the contractor to persuade him to forget his plans. Hall refuses, but, realizing that he was in for a fight, asks Jim Bannon, his architect-nephew, to use his charm on the ladies in an attempt to get them to sell. Bannon accepts the assignment with delight. He conceals his identity and manages to become friendly with Jinx. But he soon falls in love with her and finds himself sympathetic toward her plans. Jinx, learning that he was an architect, arranges to have the deeds to all the properties turned over to him, and asks him to draw plans to rebuild the quarter in accordance with her grandmother's wishes. Hall, learning of Bannon's intentions, discloses to Jinx that he was his nephew. Jinx and her people feel that Bannon had befriended them falsely to get hold of the deeds, but the young man soon convinces them of his sincerity. Aided by Jinx and the others, Bannon embarks on a campaign to break down his uncle's resistance. Hall, unable to stand the good-natured pressure, finally agrees to build his warehouse elsewhere.

Edward Eliscu wrote the screen play, Jay Gorney produced it, and Arthur Dreifuss directed it. The cast includes Steve Cochran, Isabelita and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Swingin' On a Rainbow"  
with Jane Frazee and Brad Taylor**

(Republic, Sept. 1; time, 72 min.)

Just a moderately entertaining program comedy with music. Here and there it has situations that will provoke laughs, but for the most part the comedy, some of it slapstick, is so forced that it fails to make much of an impression. In its favor are the tuneful songs and the swift-moving pace, as well as the very pleasant singing of Jane Frazee. The story, which revolves around Miss Frazee's efforts to outwit an unscrupulous bandleader who had plagiarized one of her songs, is rather complicated and contrived, but it will probably amuse audiences that are not too hard to please:—

Jane, an unknown singer with a talent for writing music, submits an original song to a contest conducted by Richard Davies, a prominent bandleader, who each week awarded a \$1,000 prize to the composer of the song selected. Although Jane receives notice that her song had been rejected, she hears Davies play it on the radio as one of his own tunes. She rushes to New York to claim the prize, but Davies leaves town to avoid her. Without funds to continue her stay in New York, Jane, determined to get the prize money, represents herself as Davies' niece and manages to gain the use of his swank hotel apartment during his absence. There, sight unseen, she carries on a wall-pounding feud with Brad Taylor, her neighbor, a wealthy but striving lyric writer. Through a series of circumstances, Jane, posing as Davies' collaborator, submits



her songs for a proposed radio show sponsored by Minna Gombell, a manufacturer of beauty aids, on which Amelita Ward, Taylor's fiancée, was to be the star singer. Taylor, through Amelita's influence, is hired to write the lyrics for Jane's music. Jane and Taylor fall in love, much to Amelita's displeasure. Meanwhile Davies, learning that Jane was posing as his collaborator, rushes back to New York. After a series of incidents, in which Amelita withdraws from the show on the night of the premiere, and in which Jane, substituting for her, proves a sensation, Davies, who had threatened to stop the show, changes his mind and willingly accepts Jane as his collaborator. With Amelita out of the way, Jane and Taylor plan to marry.

Olive Cooper and John Grey wrote the screen play, Eddy White produced it, and William Beaudine directed it. The cast includes Harry Langdon, Tim Ryan, Paul Harvey and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

## TWO IMPORTANT EXHIBITOR MEETINGS

(Continued from back page)

representing the participating exhibitor units, and with such exhibitors he deemed necessary, to cooperate with and support the Government in such matters and to such extent as may be agreeable to the Department of Justice.

To bring the participating units closer together on matters of mutual interest, it was proposed that the scope of the Conference, which was originally confined to the Consent Decree, be enlarged to include such matters as exorbitant and discriminating film rentals, and taxation. Without taking formal action, it was agreed that the General Counsel should notify the participating units whenever tax hearings are scheduled, so that arrangements might be made for joint representation.

Jesse L. Stern, of the Unaffiliated Exhibitors of New York City, was elected Moderator, and Nathin Yamins, of the Independent Exhibitors of New England, treasurer.

The following is a report on the meeting of Allied's Board of Directors:

The resolutions adopted and the other action taken by the C.I.E. were approved.

The Goldman case in Philadelphia, in which the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals held that the eight major companies were guilty of violating the anti-trust laws, was discussed by Mr. Myers, who explained that, under the decision, exhibitors who could not qualify for relief under Section X of the Consent Decree could now file suit with good prospect of success.

In the matter of "jack-rabbit" 16mm shows, reports were made of conditions in different parts of the country, and it was agreed that the situation was getting out of hand. It was reported also that four distributors have directed their managers to prepare for handling of 16mm prints. The committee in charge of this matter was requested to question again the distributors about their intentions as regards 16mm distribution in the domestic market. During the discussion, it was suggested that exhibitors in situations that draw patronage from small towns without theatres should protect themselves by running 16mm shows in such towns.

The Board adopted unanimously a resolution to be sent to President Truman congratulating him on the victorious ending of the war, and pledging support and cooperation in the post-war era.

A discussion was held on pre-fabricated theatres, and it was the consensus of opinion that they were more of a menace than a boom. Leo Yassenoff, of the ITO of Ohio, who has had extensive experience in theatre construction, doubted if pre-fabricated theatres could be manufactured, transported, and erected as cheaply as theatres constructed on the site.

A brief discussion was held on the Mead Bill (S.1320), which involves Government financing of small business. The General Counsel was requested to keep the Board informed on the progress of the measure.

A resolution was adopted approving in principle a plan introduced recently by Mrs. Arretus Burt, motion picture chairman of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, calling for the curbing of juvenile delinquency through suitable motion picture programs.

Taking exception to a story in the August 14 issue of *Film Daily*, which listed by names a large number of exhibitors and leaders, including many present at the meeting, as having written letters approving MGM's "19 point" sales policy, the Board, after establishing that neither the leaders present, nor any Allied regional association as a body, had endorsed or approved the MGM policy as represented in the story, passed a resolution protesting MGM's release of the story. (Editor's Note: Following announcement of this resolution, William F. Rodgers, MGM's vice-president and general sales manager, stated that the trade papers had misinterpreted the fact that twenty-eight exhibitor leaders had written to him in answer to his invitation to present to him subjects for discussion at the recent MGM sales meeting in Chicago.)

In the matter of film prices, the Board adopted unanimously a resolution, applicable to all the companies, to the effect that no exhibitor should be compelled or required, against his will or judgment, to submit to any of the following practices as a condition to the right to obtain pictures: (1) Blind pricing; (2) Percentage arrangements; (3) Practices that deprive an exhibitor of control over the operating policies of his theatre, chief among which are preferred playing time, extended runs, and increased admission prices.

Considerable attention was given to the subject of checking, particularly with reference to Confidential Reports, Inc. It was reported that facts gathered during an investigation of this company disclosed that the principal complaints related to the use of local checkers, as well as of incompetent checkers. It was reported also that considerable evidence was gathered tending to show collusion between the distributors owning and using the service of Confidential Reports. A resolution was adopted directing the General Counsel to make a thorough investigation of the complaints with a view to lodging such information with the proper authorities, should the facts developed warrant such action.

Some of the directors expressed the view that checking as practiced was antiquated, unsatisfactory, and an unnecessary drain on the industry. Different substitutes for checking were suggested and, without passing on the merits of these suggestions, the Board authorized the appointment of a committee to investigate the subject.

## 16MM "JACK-RABBIT" SHOWS

Arthur M. Loew, president of Loew's International Corporation, announced recently that his company would organize a special division for the distribution in foreign markets of MGM features and short subjects in 16mm film.

Mr. Loew said that the 16mm prints would supplement rather than supplant the foreign markets now served with 35mm prints, the purpose of the new division being to open up a new field by bringing film entertainment to people who live in isolated communities or in towns that are too small to support a regular theatre.

He made it clear, however, that the new division would confine its activities to foreign markets, and that the distribution of 16mm prints was not contemplated by MGM in either the United States or Canada. Mr. Loew stated also that the distribution of 16mm prints in foreign markets would in no way compete with the territories now being served with 35mm prints.

"For several years," said Mr. Loew, "I have observed and studied the increasing use of 16mm film. The war has given tremendous impetus to the improvement of 16mm projectors, sound, and film, and today narrow-gauge film approaches 35mm quality when projected before audiences of less than 1,000.

"I do not believe that 35mm will be discarded in favor of 16mm; far from it. What will happen, in my opinion, is that 16mm will open up a new audience for pictures that 35mm has either never reached or barely touched. . . .

"Mobile projector units will be used, similar to the mobile units that have followed our soldiers wherever they have gone. By this means no location on the face of the earth is too remote to be reached by 16mm film."

According to present plans, Mr. Loew expects to have every current MGM picture reduced to 16mm, with prints available for release in foreign markets by January 1.

MGM's entrance into the 16mm distribution field makes it the first of the large motion picture companies to take this step. That some of the other companies will soon follow MGM into this field is almost a foregone conclusion, for there is apparently a tremendous audience potential in territories throughout the world that can now be reached by mobile 16mm projection units.

Although MGM has given assurances that, insofar as entertainment films are concerned, it will confine its 16mm activities to foreign fields, the question arises as to whether or not the other companies, in the event that they should enter 16mm distribution, will give similar assurances.

Just how lucrative will be the new markets accessible by mobile projection units remains to be seen, but, assuming that these markets turn out highly profitable, there is a possibility that some of the companies may decide to establish mobile units to service rural areas within the United States and Canada. Then the 16mm business would indeed become a threat to theatre exhibition. It might not be entirely objectionable if the mobile units confined their showings to purely rural districts that do not have ready access to established theatres. And in that case, care would have to be exercised to keep the mobile units out of small towns, even though they have no theatres, but from which many exhibitors draw patronage.

No one can say at this time just how intensified the use of 16mm entertainment films will become as re-

gards their exhibition by mobile units. No one can deny, however, that it poses a serious competitive threat to the established exhibitor.

The exhibitors can expect little if any protection from mobile units exhibiting entertainment films that are produced by independent people exclusively for the 16mm market. But when it comes to entertainment films produced for established theatres in 35mm, and then reduced to 16mm for what is known in the trade as "jack-rabbit" shows, then the exhibitors can and should take steps to protect their interests.

In the first place, they should demand of the different distributors an expression of their plans and intentions regarding 16mm films. Then, again, they should insist upon the inclusion in their film contracts of a clause to the effect that the pictures they license for exhibition will not be furnished to others in 16mm prints for exhibition within the area serviced by their theatres.

## TWO IMPORTANT EXHIBITOR MEETINGS

On August 21, 22 and 23, the Conference of Independent Exhibitors and the Board of Directors of Allied States Association met in session, separately, in Pittsburgh, to discuss current as well as post-war problems affecting independent exhibition.

Because the C.I.E. and National Allied reflect the opinions of truly independent exhibitors, HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that a summary of the business transacted and the decisions made at both meetings will be of interest to its subscribers.

The following is a report on the meeting of the C.I.E.:

Present were representatives of the Independent Exhibitors of New England; Allied Theatres of Conn.; Allied Theatre Owners of New Jersey; Motion Picture Theatre Owners of Maryland; Allied Ind. Theatre Owners of Eastern Pa.; Allied Motion Picture Owners of Western Pa.; ITO of Ohio; Allied Theatres of Michigan; ITO Protective Association of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan; Allied Theatre Owners of Texas; Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana; Allied Theatre Owners of Illinois; Unaffiliated Independent Exhibitors of New York City; Allied-Independent Theatre Owners of Iowa-Nebraska; North Central Allied Independent Theatres; and the Pacific Coast Conference, which is comprised of the ITO of Northern California and Nebraska, ITO of Southern California and Arizona, ITO of Washington, Northern Idaho, and Alaska, and the ITO of Oregon.

Abram F. Myers, Allied's General Counsel, reported on the status of the Government's anti-trust suit against the major companies, the investigations carried on by the Department of Justice in the field, and the procedure to be followed at the trial.

A resolution addressed to the Attorney General was adopted by the conference expressing confidence in and appreciation of the manner in which the suit has been and is being handled, and pledging the Conference's continued cooperation and support.

The delegates expressed the unanimous view that the Conference should be continued at least until a final decree had been entered. Mr. Myers was appointed General Counsel of the Conference, and he was authorized to associate himself with counsel rep-

(Continued on inside page)



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## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1945

No. 36

### A FORMIDABLE THREAT FROM 16MM EXHIBITION

There is a growing concern among many exhibitors over the possibility of the 16mm film business becoming a serious competitive threat to the established motion picture theatre. In fact, so great has become this concern that the subject was given the attention of National Allied's board of directors at its meeting held in Pittsburgh two weeks ago. As reported in last week's issue of this paper, Allied's board of directors, after hearing reports of conditions in different parts of the country as regards "jack-rabbit" 16mm shows, agreed that the situation was getting out of hand.

Just how the expansion of the 16mm film business poses a threat to established exhibition is contained in a series of two very informative articles, written recently by James M. Jerauld, editor of *Boxoffice*, which appeared in the August 4 and 25 issues of that paper. Following are some of the highlights in Mr. Jerauld's articles concerning the expansion of the 16mm field:

In seven years, the 16mm film business has expanded to a national enterprise with more projection outlets than the 35mm standard theater film. This is in spite of the war, which diverted an estimated 25,000 16mm projectors to the armed services.

Distributors of narrow gauge film say that they are on the verge of a tremendous expansion, and that large scale plans for the production of entertainment films exclusively for 16mm use are now under way, with no restrictions on their exhibition.

Jack Seaman, president of Planet Pictures, a new 16mm entertainment project, estimates that the number of 16mm projectors now in use is about 70,000, and he says that certain financial groups are planning to open circuits of 16mm theatres. These same groups will rely also upon portable equipment for smaller communities. Seaman estimates that there is a potential audience of 10,000,000 persons in the United States alone.

According to those in the 16mm field, any community of at least 500 persons is a profitable stopping place for a mobile unit using portable 16mm equipment.

The most important element still lacking in the 16mm business is a system of national distribution, but two companies are now in the process of working out a method of supplying this element.

"Anybody with a projector," writes Mr. Jerauld, "can get a complete entertainment program anywhere by simply writing a letter to one of the dozens of distributing companies and enclosing a check after specifying the subjects. These subjects run from the latest newsreels made from combat footage furnished free by the Government, through old cartoons and

20-minute name band numbers to features. Longest feature in circulation in the 16mm field is John Steinbeck's 'Of Mice and Men,' 104 minutes. Rental prices range from \$2.75 to \$17.50 per subject, some outstanding features correspondingly higher.

"Many projector owners who started out with home entertainment for their families and friends are now exhibitors on a small scale. One California man has a big bus with 52 seats. Some furnish shows to organizations for which they are paid fees; others tour with their own shows and charge their own admissions. A book has been published on how to do this.

"As no operators license is required, the stock being non-inflammable, and there is no overhead, the admissions are nominal. This puts the 16mm business into the free and easy era of the early 35mm days 40 years ago, with admissions often as low as 15 cents."

Elsewhere in his articles, Mr. Jerauld writes of the progress made by the 16mm business in the educational, religious, and advertising fields, and he indicates that the success of these operations has given many of the 16mm distributors, as well as operators, new ideas for expansion in the entertainment field. He points out also that some sizeable organizations have decided to go into 16mm distribution on a national scale. He reports that Ross Federal, for example, plans to maintain film libraries in its thirty-one offices throughout the country, and to handle projection equipment and supplies for all comers. Another one mentioned is George Hirliman, head of International Theatrical and Television Corporation, who intends to establish thirty exchanges. In addition to distribution, Mr. Hirliman is said to plan, not only to produce 16mm films for entertainment, but also to market a new 16mm projector for \$149.50, as compared with the current price of \$379.

Thus it appears that the rapid progress made by the 16mm interests in the past seven years, together with their ambitious plans for expansion in the coming years, may develop into a serious competitive threat to established exhibition, particularly to exhibitors in situations that depend upon rural patronage from the outlying districts of the areas they serve.

As it has already been said in these columns last week, there remains to be seen just how lucrative will be the new markets accessible to mobile 16mm projection units. However, since the indications are that these markets may turn out profitable, the thoughtful exhibitor will begin now to form his plans to counteract whatever competition 16mm exhibition may offer in his territory.

Because some of the large motion picture companies may think of entering 16mm distribution in this country themselves, this paper suggested last

(Continued on last page)

### **"A Sporting Chance" with Jane Randolph and John O'Malley**

(Republic, June 4; time, 56 min.)

Although it offers little that is novel, this comedy-melodrama should provide a diverting hour's entertainment as the lower half of a mid-week double bill in secondary theatres. The story, which is just another version of the "spoiled young heiress proves her worth" theme, is ordinary, and its treatment is conventional, but it has enough comedy, romantic complications, and exciting action to please those who are not too fussy. The melodramatic part of the story is rather contrived, but it serves to give the picture an exciting climax. Considering the material, the direction and the acting are adequate:—

When Robert Middlemass, a wealthy shipbuilder, dies, he leaves his fortune to Jane Randolph, his flighty niece, with a condition that, during the course of a year, she hold down a job at the shipyards solely on her own merit and ability. The will stipulated also that John O'Malley, manager of the shipyards and executor of the estate, was to be the sole judge of Jane's right to inherit the estate. Jane accuses O'Malley of influencing her uncle against her, but she accepts the challenge of the will and determines to make good. She moves to a cheap boarding house tenanted by other shipyard workers, and accepts a menial job at the yards. Without revealing her identity, she labors hard and is advanced gradually. Stephen Barclay, a fellow boarder, becomes attracted to her, but although Jane treats him pleasantly she finds that her feelings toward O'Malley had become more favorable. O'Malley, having noticed that Jane had become more human and generous, finds himself falling in love with her. Barclay, considering him a rival, becomes insanely jealous. Their rivalry eventually leads to a fist fight on the deck of a ship under construction, during which Barclay accidentally falls into a hold that had been set on fire. O'Malley, disregarding his own safety, extinguishes the blaze and rescues Barclay. Jane ends the rivalry by declaring her love for O'Malley.

Dane Lussier wrote the screen play, Rudolph E. Abel produced it, and George Blair directed it. The cast includes Edward Gargan, Isabel Withers and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Come Out Fighting" with the East Side Kids**

(Monogram, Sept. 29; time, 62 min.)

A satisfactory program entertainment for followers of the "East Side Kids" pictures, of which this is the latest. The plot follows faithfully the usual pattern employed in the series, with the "Kids," led by Leo Gorcey, their cocky leader, becoming involved with racketeers but working on the side of law and order. Despite the story's flimsiness, however, it moves along at a rapid pace and has plentiful comedy. Considerable laughter is provoked by Gorcey's misuse of big words and by the usual rowdy, mischievous antics of the "Kids." As a matter of fact, the comedy is better than it has been in most of the recent pictures in the series:—

Because of their rowdyism while training for a boxing tournament, the "Kids" are punished by a neighborhood policeman, who padlocks their clubroom.

Gorcey, however, arranges with June Carlson, his girl friend, whose father was a police sergeant, to intercede with Addison Richards, the police commissioner, to countermand the closing order. Richards, taking a liking to the "Kids," agrees to open the clubhouse. He then arranges for them to accept Johnny Duncan, his pampered son, as a member of the club "to make a man out of him." Meanwhile George Meeker, a gambling racketeer, plots to discredit the commissioner and to put Pat Gleason, his gambling competitor, out of business; he arranges with Amelita Ward to vamp the commissioner's son and to lure him to Gleason's gambling club on a night set for a police raid. Gorcey, who was employed by Gleason as a chauffeur, learns of the plot and leads the "Kids" to the club to spirit Duncan away before the police arrive. Although he succeeds in saving the young man, Gorcey himself is caught in the raid and jailed. The subsequent notoriety given the incident results in Gorcey's disqualification from the boxing tournament. The commissioner's son, however, substitutes for Gorcey in the boxing match, and wins. The young man then reveals the truth to his father, who sees to it that Gorcey is vindicated publicly.

Earle Snell wrote the screen play, Sam Katzman and Jack Dietz produced it, and William Beaudine directed it. The cast includes Huntz Hall, Billy Benedict, Gabriel Dell, Robert Homans, Davidson Clark and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Girl of the Limberlost" with Dorinda Clifton and Ruth Nelson**

(Columbia, no release date set; time, 60 min.)

A moderately entertaining human-interest drama, the sort that should appeal to the family trade. The lack of star names, however, and the extremely modest production values relegate the picture to lower half billing in small-town and neighborhood houses. The story, which is based on Gene Stratton-Porter's well-known novel, has been produced twice before—by FBO in 1924, and by Monogram in 1934. It deals with the trials and tribulations of a young girl, who is hated and tyrannized by her unreasonable mother. One feels considerable sympathy for Dorinda Clifton, the heroine, because of the suffering brought to her by her mother's cruel attitude. Ruth Nelson, as the mother, has an unsympathetic part, but she handles it well. The closing scenes, in which mother and daughter are reconciled, are touching. Discriminating patrons may find the story old-fashioned and over-sentimental:—

Living in self-imposed poverty on a lonely farm, Ruth Nelson hated her daughter Dorinda because she felt that the girl had been the cause of her husband's death. He had met with an accident years previously, and Ruth had been unable to save him because of her pregnant condition. Despite her mother's cruelties and her refusal to pay for her high school tuition, Dorinda determines to better herself. She raises money for her education by selling her collection of butterflies, and through the kindly aid of her principal becomes a star pupil. He even teaches her to play the violin. Peggy Converse, an ill neighbor, gives Dorinda a violin that had belonged to her father, but makes her vow that she will keep the instrument



hidden from her mother. Ruth eventually comes upon Dorinda playing the violin secretly in the woods, and she recognizes it as the one owned by her late husband. Enraged, she smashes the instrument. Dorinda, heartbroken, leaves home and goes to live with a neighbor. Ruth, learning that Peggy had given the violin to Dorinda, visits the sick woman's home. There she learns that her husband had been untrue to her, and that he had been in love with Peggy. Realizing that she had been worshipping the memory of an unworthy man, Ruth changes her ways and bestows upon her daughter the motherly love due her.

Erna Lazurus wrote the screen play, Alexis Thurn-Taxis produced it, and Mel Ferrer directed it. The cast includes James Bell, Loren Tindall and others. Unobjectionable morally.

### **"First Yank in Tokyo" with Tom Neal and Barbara Hale**

(RKO, no release date set; time 82 min.)

Because of its timely title, and of the fact that the story has been tied in with the atomic bomb, "First Yank in Tokyo" may do exceptional business, depending on how well the picture is exploited. As entertainment, however, it is no more than a fairly exciting spy melodrama, with a story that is highly implausible. Yet it should go over pretty well with those who are willing to overlook the incredibilities of a plot, for the action is never permitted to lag, and suspense is sustained all the way through. Tom Neal, as the American soldier who, through plastic surgery, changes his facial features to that of a Japanese in an effort to contact an American war prisoner in Japan, gives a very acceptable performance, despite the fantastic demands of his part. As is to be expected in pictures of this type. Japanese bestiality is emphasized. On the whole, it is a picture that should appeal more to men than to women:—

Neal, a Major in the American Air Force, who had lived in Japan and spoke the language well, is asked by his superiors to volunteer for an important but dangerous mission — that of making contact with Marc Cramer, an Army ordnance expert, held prisoner in Japan, to obtain from him secret information needed to complete the atomic bomb. Neal accepts the assignment and agrees to submit to plastic surgery to change his facial features, fully realizing that he would look like a Japanese for the remainder of his life. After months of intensive training, Neal is smuggled into Japan by the Korean "underground" and, posing as a discharged Japanese war hero, makes his way to the prison camp where Cramer was held. There, he is shocked to find Barbara Hale, his sweetheart, whom he believed had died on Bataan, acting as head nurse in the prison hospital. Barbara, however, fails to recognize him. To aggravate his perilous position, Neal discovers that the commandant of the camp (Richard Loo) was his former roommate at an American college. Loo fails to recognize Neal, but suspects that they had met previously. Neal, aided by Keye Luke, a Korean agent, contacts Cramer and obtains from him the secret data. On the night he plans to return home, Neal learns that Loo was forcing his unwanted attentions upon Barbara. He resolves to take both Barbara and Cramer back with him, but in the attempt he inadvertently reveals his identity to Loo. There follows a series of breathtak-

ing events, in which Neal succeeds in spiritedly Barbara and Cramer aboard a waiting British submarine while he and Luke hold off the attackers at the cost of their lives.

J. Robert Bren wrote the screen play and produced it. Gordon Douglas directed it. The cast includes Leonard Strong, Benson Fong and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Shady Lady" with Ginny Simms, Robert Paige and Charles Coburn**

(Universal, Sept. 6; time, 93 min.)

A fairly good comedy-melodrama, with music, but it does not rise much above the level of program grade. The production is not pretentious, nor does the ordinary story take any unexpected twists, but it has enough good comedy situations and witty dialogue to put it across with average audiences. Charles Coburn, by his expert handling of the comedy lines, makes more of the material than what it really offers. In addition to playing the romantic lead, Ginny Simms sings several songs in her usual good voice, but the tunes are not the sort that will linger in one's mind after leaving the theatre. A short but amusing sequence is the one in which Joe Frisco, as a tramp on a park bench, offers advice on love to the romancing hero and heroine:—

Released from a Kentucky prison, Charles Coburn, a professional card sharp, is met by Ginny Simms, his niece, singer in a Chicago night-club, who determines to make him go "straight." On the train to Chicago, Ginny has an unpleasant encounter with Robert Paige, a deputy state's attorney, when he mistakenly enters her drawing room. Coburn is delighted to find that the club Ginny sang in had a back-room poker game, one of several rackets operated by Alan Curtis, who owned the club, but before he can join the game it is stopped by Curtis, who had been informed that Paige was about to stage a raid. Unknown to Paige, his sister, Martha O'Driscoll, had been photographed in a compromising position with Curtis, and the racketeer was using the negative to compel Martha to reveal Paige's moves against him. When Paige arrives to raid the club he finds no evidence of gambling, but it gives him an opportunity to renew acquaintances with Ginny, with whom he soon falls in love. Coburn, in turn, finds romance with Kathleen Howard, Paige's elderly aunt. Paige eventually succeeds in uncovering Curtis' racketeering activities, but he finds himself stumped when the gambler sends him a print of the compromising photograph and threatens to publish it unless he drops the investigation. Ginny, learning of Paige's dilemma, deduces that Curtis had hidden the negative in an expensive cigarette case he always carried. She enlists the aid of Coburn, who, applying his special technique, wins the cigarette case from Curtis in a crooked poker game, thus enabling Paige to retrieve the negative. It all ends with Martha's reputation saved, Ginny and Paige in each other's arms, and Coburn and Miss Howard beaming upon one another.

Curt Siodmak, Gerald Geraghty, and M. M. Musselman wrote the screen play, and George Waggner produced and directed it. Joe Gershenson was executive producer. The cast includes James Burke and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



week that the exhibitors should demand of all the distributors an expression of their plans and intentions. It was suggested also that the exhibitors should insist upon the inclusion in their film contracts of a clause to the effect that the pictures they license for exhibition will not be licensed to others in 16mm prints for exhibition within the area serviced by their theatres. Such a clause would, of course, protect the exhibitor only with respect to the product he buys from a particular distributor.

But there are other problems that may confront an exhibitor as regards 16mm competition. One, for example, is entertainment films produced exclusively for the 16mm field. In this case, there will probably be no restrictions as to where the pictures shall be shown, but an exhibitor might combat this competition along the following lines: First, as regards the competition in his own town, he should try to have an ordinance passed by his local lawmakers requiring traveling 16mm motion picture operators to pay a specified license fee for the privilege of operating within the city's limits, and to abide by strict sanitation regulations and fire prevention rules. Those of you who have read our recent editorials on restricting traveling carnivals might incorporate some of the suggestions contained therein if you should try to induce your City Council to pass an ordinance regulating "jack-rabbit" exhibitors.

Secondly, as regards the competition in localities that have no theatres, but from which an exhibitor draws patronage, he might follow the suggestion offered at the recent Allied meeting, namely, that he should protect himself by running 16mm shows in such communities. In keeping with this suggestion, HARRISON'S REPORTS would like to add that exhibitors in such situations should include in their film contracts for 35mm pictures a clause that would give them the exclusive right to exhibit the same pictures in 16mm prints in the outlying districts normally served by their theatres. Since pictures produced exclusively for 16mm exhibition will undoubtedly not match the quality of pictures produced for the 35mm market, the exhibitor who shows regular nationally advertised feature pictures in 16mm in outlying districts will certainly have an advantage over the traveling showman exhibiting inferior product.

There is still another possible problem — a mighty serious one, for if it should come to pass it may develop into one of the rankest abuses the exhibitors have ever experienced. I refer to the possibility of some of the distributors using 16mm exhibition of current pictures as a threat against recalcitrant exhibitors either in an attempt to force them to accede to inequitable rental terms, or in an attempt to gain playing time for some of their pictures in situations where an exhibitor can use only a limited number of pictures each season and must of necessity eliminate the product of some companies.

There was a time when a film salesman, to whip an exhibitor into line, threatened to build a competitive theatre across the street, or used other tricks and ruses, most of which are too numerous to recount here; besides, most of you are familiar with them. Now 16mm exhibition may serve as a new weapon for them; whenever a salesman fails to conclude a deal with an established theatre, he may threaten to have his company's pictures reduced to 16mm size and exhibited by mobile 16mm units right in the

town. Or he may threaten to have the pictures exhibited by the town's churches, Elks, Kiwanis, or Rotary Clubs, war veterans' posts, and other similar organizations, which would be only too happy to grasp the opportunity to raise funds for their individual purposes. And, in the event any of these organizations do not have 16mm projection equipment, it would be relatively simple and inexpensive for the distributor to furnish them with their needs.

HARRISON'S REPORTS does not pretend to have the solution for the variety of problems that may beset the exhibitors as the result of the 16mm field's expansion. It merely seeks to bring to the exhibitors' attention the fact that the 16mm business has graduated to long pants and now seeks to make a mark for itself in the entertainment world. The exhibitors and their organizations should promptly give the subject thorough study with a view, not only toward protecting the established 35mm theatre from undesirable 16mm competition, but also toward using 16mm operation to the advantage of the 35mm exhibitor.

\* \* \*

While on the subject of possible competitive threats to exhibition, I'd like to call your attention to the following news item, which appeared in the September 5 issue of the *New York World-Telegram* under a Washington dateline:

"The pessimists who fear that Uncle Sam will be stuck with billions of dollars of unsalable surplus war goods should tell it to the Marines. Also, to an ever-increasing group of idea-packed soldiers and sailors.

"These men, including both veterans and many still in the service, are full of schemes for making use of surpluses. So enthusiastic are they that they're bombarding the Surplus Property Board with a thousand letters a week.

"'Who could have thought,' a board spokesman said today, 'that anybody would be interested in acquiring any of those round-topped quonset huts that the Army used in the Arctic? Well, we've already had lots of suggestions for their use from veterans.'

"One chap, for example, got to thinking about those huts after returning to his home in Phoenix, Ariz. They'd be just the thing, he decided, to help him start a chain of low-priced movie houses in small towns which never before boasted a movie theatre."

This chap, states the article, was advised to get in touch with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

Whether or not any one will follow through on this veteran's idea for the use of quonset huts is something that only time will tell. But even if the use of quonset huts should prove to be unfeasible, the idea has been sown. And, in view of a recent estimate by the U. S. Office of Education that the armed services will have some 40,000 to 50,000 16mm projectors available for civilian use, this idea, which at first blush may seem ridiculous, cannot be laughed off; it begins to assume substantial proportions.

Exhibitors must face the reality that returning soldiers, as well as civilians with war-time nest-eggs, are full of ideas for post-war careers, and that many of them look to the motion picture exhibition field, where they will become an unmistakable competitive factor. Now is the time for the established exhibitor to prepare to meet these new-comers.



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1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1945

No. 37

### DIVIDED OPINION ABOUT GROSSES

Hardly a day goes by without a story being published in some of the trade papers about record-breaking box-office receipts in different parts of the country.

*Motion Picture Daily*, for example, publishes in its September 12 issue an item stating that "strong film attractions, offered to coincide with the pre-school opening rush just prior to Labor Day and with the return of vacationists, aided also by some cool and wet weather, made the five weeks just ended the most consistently lucrative period of 1945 to date."

Basing its information on reports from "field correspondents covering as many as 147 key houses," *Motion Picture Daily* states that, except for a single week early in March, the average grosses per week for the key city houses reported on have not been equaled during any other week in 1945. It does not say whether the figures quoted are accurate or whether they are merely approximated. It may be assumed, however, that they fit into the latter category, because the grosses are reported in "round" numbers; fractions of a dollar, or of one hundred dollars, are not shown.

Let us compare this report with another report—one that quotes accurate figures. It comes from a bulletin issued recently by the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio. The report follows:

"The Ohio 3% admissions tax for eight months ending August 31, 1945, amounted to \$1,446,487.02, as against \$1,676,309.49 for the same period of 1944, a drop of nearly 15%, BUT for the month of August, 1945, the tax amounted to \$128,341 as against \$232,958 for the same month of 1944, a drop of 45%."

The publishing by the trade papers of "stupendous" weekly grosses and daily box-office receipts has never been of any value to the exhibitor; its only effect is to lure him into paying rentals far in excess of what the pictures are worth. That the figures published are generally unreliable can be judged by the fact that *Motion Picture Daily*, in the same aforementioned story, states: "The comparable late Summer-early Fall period of 1944, although high for that year, ran way behind the five weeks just ended." Yet the ITO of Ohio, quoting accurate admission tax figures, shows that August, 1945, which is included in the five weeks reported on by the *Daily*, ran 45% behind August, 1944.

Here are conclusive figures of but one state. It is regrettable that the tax figures of the other states are not available at the moment. When they become available, and if they should show a trend similar to

the trend in Ohio, the industry would have an unequivocal answer to the question of whether box-office grosses are rising, falling, or remaining stationary.

In the meantime, this paper can report that, in the opinion of prominent independent exhibitors, box-office grosses have passed their peak and are definitely on the decline. These exhibitors insist that now is the time to begin exercising the greatest care in determining, not only what pictures to buy, but also what prices to pay for them.

### A CONSOLATION OF MINOR SIGNIFICANCE

The Surplus Property Board in Washington announced last week that 16mm projectors and films used by the Armed Forces and other Government agencies will, when no longer needed for war service, be made available at low cost to schools that cannot afford to buy them at retail prices. The Board said that it does not contemplate selling 16mm equipment to educational institutions that are financially able to buy from regular dealers.

No estimate has been made of the number of 16mm sound projectors that will eventually become available as surplus property, but it is known that the military services alone had ordered approximately forty thousand. Many of these have undoubtedly been lost or damaged beyond repair, and a considerable number of others will probably require extensive servicing and repairs.

Those of you who have been concerned about what disposition the Government may make of surplus 16mm equipment will be relieved to learn that none of it will go to the "jack-rabbit" exhibitors who compete with regular theatres. This fact alone, however, is not sufficient to remove the threat of 16mm competition.

As pointed out in these columns last week, regular dealers will make available to prospective traveling showmen 16mm projectors that will range in price from \$149.50 to \$379. The cost of these projectors is so low that those who plan to enter the 16mm exhibition field will probably shed few tears over the Surplus Property Board's decision to make the Government's surplus projectors available to educational institutions only.

The field of 16mm exhibition of entertainment films seems to be on the verge of expanding both fast and wide; it looms as a formidable competitive threat to established exhibition. To cope with it, before it grows out of all bounds, requires immediate planning and action.

**"Men in Her Diary" with Peggy Ryan,  
Louise Allbritton and Jon Hall**

(Universal, Sept. 14; time, 73 min.)

A moderately amusing light comedy, of program grade. It deals with a young, romantically frustrated secretary, who records in her diary imaginary love affairs with men she had met casually. The diary, of course, falls into the wrong hands, causing a series of turbulent events in the lives of the men mentioned. The idea of the story is fair, but as presented it is a rather mixed-up affair, with little human interest. A few of the situations are laugh-provoking, but much of the comedy is dull. Peggy Ryan, as the secretary, does not sing or dance in this picture. The doings of the different characters are not the sort that will arouse one's sympathy. Even Peggy fails to arouse one's emotions, for she is made to appear more foolish than pathetic:—

Jon Hall, a wealthy publisher, is devoted to Louise Allbritton, his unreasonably jealous wife. When his secretary goes on a vacation, Louise insists that an unattractive substitute take her place; she selects Peggy Ryan, one of the office girls. Peggy, a romantically frustrated girl, kept a diary in which she wrote of the imaginary romances she had with men who had no more than a nodding acquaintance with her. While acting as Hall's secretary, she enters in the diary highly colored accounts of the "attentions" he paid her daily. The diary eventually falls into Louise's hands, and she starts divorce proceedings against Hall, naming Peggy as correspondent. Virginia Grey, Hall's ex-sweetheart and star of a show he was financing, sees in the divorce proceedings a chance to re-kindle the old affection between Hall and herself; she takes Peggy in hand and, without Hall's knowledge, transforms her from a drab-looking girl to a glamorous-looking woman. At the trial, the judge, impressed by Peggy's appearance, grants Louise the divorce. Peggy, heartbroken, accuses Virginia of scheming to break up Hall's marriage. Her accusations bring Louise to the realization that Peggy was innocent, and she reunites with Hall. Meanwhile Peggy finds real romance with William Terry, Virginia's press agent.

F. Hugh Herbert wrote the screen play, and Charles Barton produced and directed it. The cast includes Ernest Truex, Alan Mowbray, Eric Blore, Maxie Rosenbloom, Sig Ruman, Samuel S. Hinds and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Love, Honor and Goodbye"  
with Virginia Bruce, Edward Ashley,  
Nils Asther and Victor McLaglen**

(Republic, Sept. 15; time, 88 min.)

Patrons who are not too hard to please may find this domestic farce fairly amusing. Other picturegoers, however, will probably find it quite tiresome, for the story is thin and the players struggle, not too successfully, to make something out of their individual roles. Moreover, the action is draggy, causing one's interest to lag. The story's theme—that of a suspicious wife posing as another woman to compromise her husband—has been used many times, and this version does not present any novel twists. It hasn't much human interest since the characters involved are not the types that arouse sympathy. It has been produced on a fairly lavish scale, but rich trappings cannot reclaim a picture as dull as this one:—

To rid his wife (Virginia Bruce) of her desire to

become a great actress, Edward Ashley, a wealthy attorney, finances secretly a play she was to appear in; he felt assured that it would be a "flop." The critics treat the play brutally, and Ashley, delighted, orders it closed. Virginia, though hurt, admits her failure and agrees to settle down as Ashley's wife. But when Nils Asther, her leading man, informs her that Ashley had financed and closed the play, she accuses him of deliberately ruining her career and leaves him. Ashley takes to drink and, through a series of circumstances, meets up with Victor McLaglen, a tattoo artist in a penny arcade, Veda Ann Borg, his girl friend, and four-year-old Jacqueline Moore, whom McLaglen wanted to adopt but could not because the Child Welfare League insisted that she have proper home environment. Ashley, in his cups, takes them home with him. Meanwhile Virginia, learning from Ashley's secretary (Helen Broderick) that he was ill, decides to return home. There she finds Veda and the baby, and concludes that Ashley had been leading a double life. Asther, elated at this news, talks Virginia into seeking grounds for a divorce. She disguises herself as a French nurse and obtains employment at the house as the baby's governess. Ashley sees through her disguise immediately, but he allows her to believe that he was being fooled. After a series of farcical events, in which Virginia makes numerous attempts to compromise Ashley to secure evidence for her divorce, McLaglen, disturbed by their "indecent" behaviour, leaves with the baby. Virginia, believing that the baby had been kidnapped, calls the police. In the confusion that follows, Virginia's disguise is exposed and all are happily reunited.

Arthur Philips, Lee Loeb and Dick Irving Hyland wrote the screen play, Harry Grey produced it, and Albert S. Rogell directed it.

Adult entertainment.

**"River Gang" with Gloria Jean  
and John Qualen**

(Universal, Sept. 21; time, 63 min.)

A mediocre murder-mystery melodrama, the sort that will just about get by as a supporting feature in small-town and neighborhood theatres. Although Gloria Jean, as the heroine, is a sympathetic character, the story is so thin and so unoriginal that one's interest in the outcome is barely held. The picture will probably have some appeal to youthful audiences, for a considerable part of the action revolves around a "dead-end" gang of boys who capture the murderer and save Gloria from harm. As is generally the rule in pictures of this type, the one least suspected is proved guilty. It has some comedy, but it is not very bright:—

Having been brought up on fairy stories by John Qualen, her uncle, a kindly pawnbroker, Gloria Jean is laughed at by young folks her own age because of her fear of ghosts and witches. Keefe Brasselle, however, young leader of a group of mischievous but well-intentioned boys, is more understanding and friendly towards her. One night Sheldon Leonard, an uncouth, peg-legged individual, brings a violin into the shop for safekeeping by her uncle. On the following morning the newspaper headlines announce that a noted composer had been murdered and that his expensive violin had been stolen. Gloria, connecting Sheldon's visit on the previous night with the murder, searches for the violin only to find that it had disappeared. Qualen insists upon reporting the loss to the police, but Keefe stops him lest he become



involved in the crime. Presuming that Sheldon had committed the murder and theft, Keefe orders his "gang" to search for him. While the boys round up Sheldon and take him to a neighborhood garage, Keefe is kidnapped by two ruffians who take him to a hideout. There, Keefe comes face to face with Qualen, who reveals himself as the secret head of a gang of thieves whose stolen goods were disposed of through his pawnshop. Qualen orders his confederates to kill Keefe lest he reveal his secret to the police. Meanwhile Keefe's gang learns of his predicament and come to his rescue. Qualen and the crooks escape. Back in the pawnshop, Gloria, who by this time had learned of her uncle's dual life, finds herself facing death at his hands. She is saved by the timely arrival of Keefe and his "gang," who capture Qualen and turn him over to the police.

Lester Charteris wrote the screen play, and Charles David produced and directed it. The cast includes Bill Goodwin, Gus Schilling and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"The House on 92nd Street" with William Eythe, Lloyd Nolan and Signe Hasso**

(20th Century-Fox, October; time, 91 min.)

Very Good! It is a capably directed, well-acted, highly exciting spy melodrama, centering around a Nazi spy ring in New York City whose members were bent on obtaining for transmission to Germany secret information dealing with the development of the atomic bomb. The story, which is based on factual data obtained from the FBI's files, and which was produced in close cooperation with that agency, to assure its authenticity, has been given a most effective treatment, one that combines brilliantly the techniques of documentary and entertainment films; it grips one's attention from start to finish. The picture is, in fact, a glowing tribute to the FBI, for it reveals to the public in minute detail some of the amazing counter-espionage methods employed by that organization in combating the vast Nazi spy system that had been built up in this country prior to World War II. Woven into the picture are some highly interesting actual scenes filmed by the FBI, showing how it kept a close watch on visitors to the German embassy in Washington before the start of the war. These same scenes helped the FBI to round up known Nazi agents at the start of hostilities. The picture should do very well at the box-office, for it is the sort that patrons will talk about after seeing it.

The story presents William Eythe, as a young American engineer, of German descent, who is approached by Nazi agents with an offer to do espionage work for Germany. Eythe agrees, but imparts this information to the FBI secretly. Lloyd Nolan, an FBI inspector, arranges with Eythe to join the spies in order to help the FBI break up the ring. Eythe goes to a Hamburg espionage school and, upon completion of his studies, is sent back to the United States to contact the Nazi agents and to build a secret radio station for the transmission of information gathered by them. Under the guidance of the FBI, with which he always maintained contact, Eythe meets the agents at their headquarters on 92nd Street, a private home operated as an exclusive dress shop by Signe Hasso, one of the spies. Although they suspect his credentials, which had been altered by the FBI, the spies give Eythe their full cooperation. Through Eythe, the FBI learns of the spies movements and of the fact that

they were accumulating secret information about the atomic bomb. They arrange with Eythe to transmit false information to Germany, thus giving them time to investigate and stop the source of the spies' information. Meanwhile, the spies learn conclusively that Eythe was a fraud. There follows a series of exciting events in which they capture Eythe and try to kill him, only to be caught themselves by FBI agents who arrive in the nick of time.

Barre Lyndon, Charles G. Booth and John Monks, Jr. wrote the screen play, Louis de Rochemont produced it, and Henry Hathaway directed it. The cast includes Gene Lockhart, Leo G. Carroll, Lydia St. Clair and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Three's a Crowd" with Pamela Blake and Charles Gordon**

(Republic, May 23; time, 58 min.)

Passable program fare. Those who enjoy murder-mystery melodramas, but who are not too analytical, should get satisfaction out of it. The plot is a familiar one, but it holds one's interest to a fair degree since suspense is sustained fairly well throughout, and since the guilty person's identity is concealed until the very end. The story moves rather slowly, given more to talk than to action. The closing scenes, in which the murderess reveals her identity and attempts to murder the heroine, are gripping. Her reasons for her crimes, however, are not too convincing. It is a heavy type of melodrama, with practically no comedy to relieve the tension:—

Because of her mother's objections to Roland Varno, a charming but weak fellow, Pamela Blake, a young heiress, decides to marry Charles Gordon, a reputable man, who loved her sincerely. On the eve of her wedding, Pamela receives a call from Varno begging her for a last meeting. She hesitates, but Gertrude Michael, her brother's widow, whom she supported, encourages her to see him. At Varno's apartment, Pamela becomes alarmed at his strange behavior and leaves hurriedly. On the following morning Varno is found murdered. Gordon, suspecting Pamela of the crime, rushes her into a hasty marriage to protect her. Pamela, however, learns that he had gone to Varno's apartment shortly after she left, and she in turn believes that he had been implicated in the crime. Despite their suspicions of one another, however, Pamela and Gordon are drawn closer together. Subsequent events lead to the murder of Pierre Watkin, Pamela's attorney, and of a blonde woman who is revealed as Varno's widow. Both murders are committed under circumstances that lead the police to suspect both Pamela and Gordon. One night, Gertrude, through a ruse, manages to get Gordon out of the house so that she could be left alone with Pamela. She then reveals to the young heiress that she was the one who had committed the crimes as part of a plan to gain control of her fortune. Watkin and Varno had been co-schemers, but they had failed to carry out her orders. Just as Gertrude prepares to shoot Pamela, the young heiress' mother, who had overheard the confession, shoots her down. The crimes solved, Pamela and Gordon, their mutual trust restored, look forward to a happy life.

Dane Lussier wrote the screen play, Walter H. Goetz produced it, and Lesley Selander directed it. The cast includes Virginia Brissac, Ted Hecht and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

## THE NATIONAL POLICY MYTH

One of the chief arguments most film salesmen use, when demanding unreasonable rental terms for pictures, is that the terms conform with their companies' national sales policies. Those of you who may have wondered whether there is any such thing as a national sales policy will be interested in what Pete Wood, secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, has to say on the subject in an organization bulletin dated September 5. Says Wood:

"At the Board Meeting of National Allied held in Pittsburgh during the week of August 20th, we had the privilege of examining the reports received by the National Caravan Committee from all sections of the country, and it is quite evident that film is being sold mostly under the rigid policy of 'GET-ALL-THE-TARRIF-WILL-BEAR.' With the exception of perhaps one company, none of the film distributors has anything that resembles a national sales policy . . ."

Stating that the figures he saw in Pittsburgh "could fill a fair sized book," Pete Wood then gives his members some of the highlights in the hope that the figures will be of some value to them in their dealings with the different distributors.

In the belief that the information will be of value to its subscribers, either in connection with the deals they have already made, or for use as a reference in pending negotiations for deals, HARRISON REPORTS is reproducing the following deals cited by Pete Wood:

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

- "Without Love"—Second bracket
- "Gentle Annie"—Fourth bracket
- "The Clock"—Second bracket
- "Picture of Dorian Gray"—Third bracket
- "Son of Lassie"—Second bracket
- "Valley of Decision"—First bracket
- "Thrill of a Romance"—First bracket
- "Twice Blessed"—Fourth bracket
- "Bewitched"—Fourth bracket

### Paramount

- "Affairs of Susan"—Top flat rental
- "Murder, He Says"—60% of top flat rental
- "A Medal for Benny"—60% of top flat rental
- "Incendiary Blonde"—Percentage split, starting at 25%
- "Northwest Mounted Police" (reissue)—40% of top flat rental
- "This Gun for Hire" (reissue)—20% of top flat rental

### RKO

- "Back to Bataan"—60% of top flat rental
- "Along Came Jones"—Top flat rental

### Twentieth Century-Fox

- "Song of Bernadette"—75% of top flat rental
- "Wilson"—75% of top flat rental
- "Diamond Horseshoe"—Sliding scale, 25% to 40%
- "Nob Hill"—25%
- "Junior Miss"—Top flat rental
- "A Bell for Adano"—Top flat rental
- "Call of the Wild" (reissue)—25% of top flat rental

## United Artists

- "It's in the Bag"—40% of top flat rental
- "Bedside Manner"—30% of top flat rental
- "The Great John L"—80% of top flat rental
- "The Southerner"—30% of top flat rental
- "Colonel Blimp"—25% of top flat rental
- "Blood on the Sun"—30% to 40%
- "The Story of G.I. Joe"—30% to 40%
- "Guest Wife"—30% to 40%

## Universal

1945-46 product. Four on percentage. The other fifty-one are being sold flat rental in so many different ways that it is impossible to list all of them. All we can say is that these flat rental prices range from 100% of top flat rental down to 12½% of top flat rental.

## Warner Brothers

- "The Corn is Green"—100% of top flat rental
- "Christmas in Connecticut"—100% of top flat rental

"Pillow to Post"—65% of top flat rental

EXPLANATION: "65% of top flat rental" means that if your top flat rental is \$100, Warner Brothers' "Pillow to Post" at 65% of top flat rental would be \$65.

While Wood does not quote any deals on Columbia pictures, he has this to say, in part, about that company:

"In our opinion it is a waste of space to comment in any manner whatsoever on this gang of 'elastic' thinkers (?). Their record of unfilled promises is so long that we are beginning to lose sympathy for all exhibitors who do business with them. . . ."

"Here is an incident indicative of the manner in which they do business:

"Trade papers showed 'A Thousand and One Nights' as Production No. 6005. Many exhibitors bought the 1944-45 product on the basis of the top four (No. 6001-6004) on percentage. We are now informed that under Columbia's 'flexible' method of doing business, this production is being billed as No. 6004."

## SPECIAL COMMITTEE COMPLETED

The Conference of Independent Exhibitors on the Consent Decree has selected a special committee to follow the trial of the Government's anti-trust suit against the major companies, which is scheduled to get under way on October 8. The Committee is to cooperate with the Department of Justice in such ways and to such extent as may be agreeable to the Department.

Members of the special committee include Jesse L. Stern, Moderator of the Conference and President of the Unaffiliated Independent Exhibitors of New York; Robert H. Poole, Executive Secretary of the Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Exhibitors; Nathan Yamins, Chairman of Independent Exhibitors, Inc., of New England; Sidney E. Samuelson, General Manager, Allied Independent Theatre Owners of Eastern Pennsylvania; Irving Dollinger, Eastern Regional Vice-President, Allied States Association; Maxwell Anderson, Secretary, Allied Theatres of Connecticut; and Abram F. Myers, General Counsel of Allied States Association and of the C.I.E.



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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1945

No. 38

### THE SPENDERS ARE BEGINNING TO RETRENCH

Since the war ended, people are saving more money than before, according to a report in the financial section of the September 19 issue of the *New York Times*, which bases this statement on deposit figures from New York's fourteen largest savings banks, for the first fifteen days of September.

"These banks," states the *Times*, "report a net gain of \$24,366,000 in savings deposits for the first half of this month, which is a larger gain than for any fifteen-day period reported by them this year. It is 20 per cent higher than the deposit gain in the first fifteen days of August and is almost double the \$13,422,000 gain for the comparable period in September last year. This continues a trend which became evident in August when the net gain in savings deposits in all of New York State's 131 savings banks was \$131,629,000, a record figure."

In view of the fact that, since this country started to convert from a war-time to a peace-time economy, income payments to individuals have been on a steady decline, the aforementioned report indicates very forcibly that people have come to the realization that the days of abnormal incomes and easy-spending are gone, and that from now on it will be smart to be thrifty.

And when people become thrifty, they become also discriminating about the things they buy and careful about the prices they pay. This will certainly be true of these thrifty people in their quest for entertainment, particularly motion picture entertainment.

For the past few years, the pent up, war-weary public, in search of some recreation, has patronized the motion picture theatre with an amazing disregard for the poor quality of many pictures. Exhibitors everywhere agree that these pictures earned more money than they deserved.

But the "honeymoon" is over now, and the producers had better take heed; poor pictures will not be tolerated by a "choosy" public. The producers will have to stop underestimating the intelligence of the picture-going public; it is remarkable how people can "scent" the good pictures.

During the lush war period, the film rentals demanded by the distributors rose to staggering heights, and the exhibitors, in order to meet these high rentals, were compelled to raise their admission prices to sums never dreamed of. While the spending-craze was on, the public paid these higher prices either without demur or with some mutterings. But now that the spirit of retrenchment prevails, the public will probably

become much more selective about the type of pictures for which they are willing to pay a high admission price.

If the industry is to come through this wave of retrenchment unscathed, the quality of pictures will have to go up and film rentals will have to come down.

### GOLDMAN FILES ANOTHER ANTI-TRUST SUIT

Apparently encouraged by his recent victory over eight of the major companies in his anti-trust action against them, William Goldman, head of the William Goldman Theatres in Philadelphia, has filed another anti-trust suit in the U. S. District Court in that city against twelve major producers, distributors, and circuits, namely, Loew's, Inc., Paramount, RKO, Twentieth Century-Fox, Columbia, Warner Bros., Vitagraph, Inc., Warner Bros. Management Corp., Stanley Co., of America, Universal, and United Artists.

Goldman charges that his Keith's and Karlton Theatres in Philadelphia, which he purchased in the past two years, and which were operated formerly by Stanley-Warner on a lease, "were frequently used for exhibition on first-run of first-class features," but that since his acquisition of the theatres "the defendants, acting in concert, refused to allow him to have any pictures whatsoever for first-run exhibition."

In his complaint, Goldman cites the opinion handed down by the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, which concluded that, in a similar action brought by him against the same defendants in behalf of his Erlanger Theatre, "each of the distributor defendants knew that its refusal to lease pictures to the plaintiff, together with the refusal of all, would result in the creation of an illegal monopoly in the business of exhibiting first-run pictures in Philadelphia by Warner Brothers." (Ed. Note: An Analysis of the Erlanger case and of the decision was published in our August 11, 1945 issue.)

In the Erlanger action, the District Court dismissed the suit, but the Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the decision and ruled in favor of Goldman, instructing the lower court to assess the damages claimed.

In the new suit, Goldman is seeking an injunction only, and is not asking for monetary damages.

In view of the fact that Allied exhibitor leaders are of the opinion that, under the decision in the Erlanger case, exhibitors who could not qualify for relief under Section X of the Consent Decree could now file suit with good prospect of success, it will be interesting to watch for the ultimate decision in Goldman's new suit, which, as it has already been pointed out, is similar to the Erlanger action.



**"Blithe Spirit" with Rex Harrison  
and Constance Cummings**

(United Artists, release date not set; time, 94 min.)

Very Good! Based on Noel Coward's highly successful Broadway and London stage play, of the same title, this British-made Technicolor production is an extremely brilliant sophisticated farce. It is strictly adult entertainment, however, and it will probably appeal more to class audiences than to the masses. It should find its best reception in big cities; small-town and neighborhood family audiences may find the caustic humor of its macabre comic tale a bit too deep for them. The story, which deals with death and life after death, is fantastic but not eerie. Pictures in which the spirits of dead characters walk through the story have seldom succeeded in providing enjoyment to most movie-goers, but the treatment given to this story is so competent and so witty that one is kept chuckling all the way through. It has been excellently produced, with direction, acting, settings and photography of the highest order:—

To accumulate information about spiritualism and about fake mediums for a novel he was writing, Rex Harrison invites Margaret Rutherford, an eccentric psychic, to hold a seance in his home. Nothing spectacular happens during the seance, but, shortly after she leaves, the spirit of Harrison's first wife (Kay Hammond), who had died seven years previously, floats into the drawing room and tells him of her intention to stay for a protracted visit. Since only Harrison could see or hear Kay, Constance Cummings, his second wife, fails to understand his odd behaviour and his apparently irrelevant remarks addressed into space; she concludes that he was either drunk or mad. Desperate over his predicament, Harrison explains to Constance that he was talking to his first wife's spirit, and he has Kay prove her presence by carrying a vase about the room in hands that could not be seen by Constance. The presence of Kay's spirit in the house causes Constance to suffer many embarrassments, much to Kay's delight. Both Constance and Harrison prevail upon the psychic to send Kay back to her spirit world, but every device the medium tries fails to work. Kay eventually becomes bored with her former household, but, being loath to return to the spirit world alone, she devises a scheme whereby Harrison would be killed so that his ghost could return with her. Her plans, however, go awry, with the result that Constance is killed. Harrison soon finds himself harried by the ghosts of both his wives. He eventually gets rid of them with the aid of the medium, but the persistent ghosts succeed in bringing about his death, compelling him to join them.

Noel Coward produced the picture, and David Lean directed it. The cast includes Jacqueline Clarke, Joyce Carey and Hugh Wakefield.

(Ed. Note: The dialogue includes two obvious advertising plugs — one for Ovaltine and the other for Alka-Seltzer.)

**"That Night with You" with Franchot Tone  
and Susanna Foster**

(Universal, Sept. 28; time, 84 min.)

This light comedy with music will have to depend on the drawing power of Franchot Tone and Susanna Foster, for as entertainment it is just fair. The story, which is somewhat farcical, is weak, and it does not hold the interest of the intelligent spectator with any kind of grip. Moreover, the characters do not

do anything that would arouse one's sympathetic interest in their acts. There are mild laughs all the way through, but for the most part the comedy is dull. In its favor are a few attractive production numbers, which have been staged imaginatively, and the always pleasant singing of Miss Foster:—

Susanna, who worked as a waitress in her boy friend's (David Bruce) diner, dreams of becoming a famous singing star. She learns that Franchot Tone, a theatrical producer was in need of a singer for his new show. She learns also that, as a youth, Tone had been married to Jacqueline De Witt, a fading Hollywood actress, and that the marriage had been annulled. Accordingly, she visits Tone and presents herself as his daughter. Tone, attracted to her, pretends to believe her story, but he soon becomes convinced when his friends, playing a practical joke, tell him of her resemblance to him. Louise Allbritton, Tone's secretary, doubts Susanna's story; she communicates with Jacqueline. Arriving from Hollywood, Jacqueline amazes Susanna by confirming her claim, but she soon makes it clear that she intended to use Susanna as a means to get the lead in Tone's show herself. Tone, convinced of his parenthood, decides to remarry Jacqueline, but it soon develops that she had a husband in Hollywood. Jacqueline decides to return home to her husband, and she informs Tone that Susanna was an imposter. Despite this turn of events, Tone asks Susanna to marry him. Susanna finds herself torn between her love for Bruce and her desire to become a star. Tone, however, settles her problem by coming to the realization that he was really in love with his secretary; he gives Bruce and Susanna his blessing, and makes her the star of his new show.

Michael Fessier and Ernest Pagano wrote and produced the screenplay. William A. Seiter directed it. The cast includes Buster Keaton, Howard Freeman, Irene Ryan and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Behind City Lights" with Lynne Roberts  
and Peter Cookson**

(Republic, Sept. 10; time, 68 min.)

Fair. It is just another program picture of small-town and neighborhood calibre. The story about an unsophisticated, small-town girl who goes to the big city in search of glamour only to return home a sadder but wiser girl is an old one, and it is told here in a conventional way. It has some human interest, and one's attention is held to a fair degree, but there is nothing in it that will make one remember it afterwards. There is a touch of comedy here and there, but not much of it:—

Lynne Roberts' marriage to William Terry, a young farmer, is interrupted suddenly by an auto crash outside her father's farmhouse, in which Peter Cookson and Jerome Cowan, New Yorkers, are injured slightly. The wedding is postponed while the two men spend a few days on the farm recuperating. Lynne falls in love with Cookson and with what he represents—the glamour and sophistication of New York. After the two men leave, Terry, aware that Lynne had fallen in love with Cookson, sympathetically releases her from their engagement and encourages her to follow him. In New York, Cookson, who made his livelihood with Cowan as a jewel thief, is disconcerted but pleased by Lynne's arrival. He falls deeply in love with her and decides to lead a respectable life. They set a date for their wedding, and he



gives her an uncut diamond to be set into an engagement ring. Lynne innocently shows the gem to a salesman in a jewelry shop; he recognizes the diamond as one that was stolen, and notifies the police. Cookson is apprehended by the police, and is fatally injured in an attempted getaway. The authorities, convinced that Lynne was not associated with the theft, release her. Brokenhearted but too proud to return home, Lynne remains in New York and leads an unhappy existence. Terry, sensing that she was in trouble, comes to the city and learns about her predicament through the police. He arranges to meet her and tactfully asks her to marry him. They return to the farm together.

Richard Weil wrote the screen play, Joseph Bercholz produced it, and John English directed it. The cast includes Esther Dale, Victor Kilian, Moroni Olsen, William Forrest and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Pardon My Past" with Fred MacMurray and Marguerite Chapman**

(Columbia, no release date set; time, 88 min.)

A highly entertaining comedy-farce. At the theatre, where the picture was previewed, every one in the audience seemed to enjoy it immensely. Based on the mistaken identity theme, the rather involved story, which presents Fred MacMurray in a dual role—that of twin brothers, has been handled deftly, with enough new twists to set it apart from most pictures based on a similar theme. Except for the beginning, the action is swift-moving, and there is never a dull moment; one no sooner finishes one laugh than one is thrown into another. The characterizations are colorful and interesting. MacMurray gives a very good performance as the newly-discovered serviceman who finds himself mistaken for his spineless brother, a rich playboy, whom he did not know about, since both had been separated at birth. Not the least of the films' entertainment value is the fine comedy support given by William Demarest, Akim Tamiroff, and Harry Davenport:—

Honorably discharged from the Army, MacMurray and Demarest, his buddy, prepare to leave New York for Wisconsin, where MacMurray planned to invest his \$3000 savings in a milk farm. Their departure is stopped when MacMurray, mistaken for a notorious playboy, is picked up by Akim Tamiroff, a cultured gangster, who takes away his savings as part payment of a gambling debt. Unable to convince Tamiroff of his identity, MacMurray goes to the playboy's estate to recover his money. There, the members of the household, too, mistake him for the playboy. MacMurray discovers that the playboy, who was in Mexico, had a little daughter (Karolyn Grimes), a divorced wife (Rita Johnson), an irascible grandfather (Harry Davenport), a domineering uncle (Douglas Dumbrille), and a pretty secretary (Marguerite Chapman), with whom he falls in love. Determined to recover his money, MacMurray decides to pose as the playboy. He soon learns that the man he was impersonating was despised by the household as a spineless fellow, whose domineering uncle had compelled him to divorce his loving wife. Since circumstances required that he remain in the house, MacMurray sets about to straighten out the playboy's affairs. In between Tamiroff's efforts to collect the balance of the gambling debt, and the unexpected arrival of the playboy, MacMurray gets himself into all sorts of complications, in which he

and the others learn that the playboy was his twin brother, and in which every one concludes that he was attempting to steal the family fortune. Disturbed only by Marguerite's mistaken impression of his motives, MacMurray, after many more complications, succeeds in exposing the uncle as a crook, in reconciling the playboy and his wife, in recovering his savings from Tamiroff, and in winning Marguerite's heart.

Earl Felton and Karl Kamb wrote the screen play, and Leslie Fenton produced and directed it. The cast includes Charles Arnt and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"The Enchanted Forest" with Edmund Lowe, Harry Davenport and Brenda Joyce**

(PRC, Dec. 8; time, 79 min.)

"The Enchanted Forest" is a wholesome, charming fantasy, photographed in Cinecolor, the sort that may be classified as good "kid" entertainment. Its appeal for adults is doubtful; first, because of the nature of the story, and, secondly, because the action is slow-moving. The story, which revolves around a little boy who gets lost in a deep forest and is befriended by a kindly old hermit, is fanciful and simple, but it has considerable heart interest. Its charm lies in the good acting of the principal players and in the friendly association the boy and the hermit have with the birds and little animals of the forest. Harry Davenport, as the hermit, wins one sympathy, and little Billy Severn, as the lost youngster, is extremely appealing. The Cinecolor photography is exceptionally good, particularly the woodland scenes. Although the picture has its shortcomings, PRC rates an "A" for effort:—

Davenport, who found peace and contentment in the deep forests back of Woods River, had lived there so long that he could communicate with the friendly animals and birds. One day, after a severe rain storm, Davenport finds a one-year-old baby, who had miraculously survived the storm, floating down a swollen stream on a bough. Unaware that the child was the grandson of John Litel, a wealthy lumberman, Davenport takes the child to his home in the hollow of a huge Redwood tree. There he rears the child with his animal friends. Some years later, Brenda Joyce, the child's mother, still brooding over the tragedy, visits the forest and catches a fleeting glimpse of the boy (Billy Severn), who had been taught to shun the outside world. When she informs Edmund Lowe, her physician, that she had seen Billy, he believes that she is suffering from hallucinations. Brenda, however, catches other glimpses of Billy, and she becomes so insistent that she had not seen an apparition that Litel, her father, institutes a search of the forest, offering a reward to the logger who locates the boy. Davenport, who hated lumbermen because they destroyed trees, moves deeper into the forest as the men approach, taking the child with him. He becomes involved with an unscrupulous logger, who tries to kill him in the belief that he was demented, but with the aid of his animal friends, and with the guidance of mysterious voices in the forest, Davenport outwits his enemy and eventually restores Billy to the arms of his mother.

Robert Lee Johnson, John Lebar, and Lou Brook wrote the screen play, Jack Schwarz produced it, and Lew Landers directed it. Lou Brock was associate producer.

## JUST TO KEEP THE INGLORIOUS RECORD STRAIGHT

According to reports in the trade press, Columbia has finally set a tentative starting date late this month for the production of "The Life of Al Jolson," which, as the title indicates, is biographical of that entertainment figure.

As already pointed out in these columns "The Life of Al Jolson" was originally promised to Columbia's 1943-44 contract holders, but, in keeping with the company's long-established policy, it was not delivered. Instead, and again in keeping with its long-established policy, Columbia dangled it as bait for the 1944-45 contract-holders, this time under the thinly disguised title of "April Showers." And following true to form, except that the policy is now called "elastic thinking," Columbia did not deliver.

We now find it set for production within a week or two. Surely, it should be finished in time for delivery to the 1945-46 contract-holders. But are they entitled to it? No one seems to know, for the Columbia officials are guarding the identification of their 1945-46 product as if it held the secret to the atomic bomb.

Let us assume, however, that it is being promised to those signing for the 1945-46 program. Will they get it? If it should turn out to be a good picture, will it be sold separate and apart from any program, as was the case with "A Song to Remember" and as is the case with "Kiss and Tell"? Or will we find it as part of the offering for the 1946-47 program. With Columbia, only time can tell.

## THE ADMISSION TAX REQUIRES ACTION

In a report that covered a study of sixteen months, the Committee on Post-War Tax Policy, of which Roswell Magill, former Under-Secretary of the Treasury, is president, recommended this week to the Treasury Department and to the joint Congressional Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation a flexible Federal tax program designed to fit the requirements of the immediate transition period and of the first few "normal" post-war years.

Among the views detailed in a 275-page report, titled "Tax Program for a Solvent America," the Committee contended that there was a "proper place" for excise taxes, and added that, "while most of the war-time 'nuisance' excise taxes should be removed, a reasonable number of excise taxes should be retained in order to diversify sources of tax revenue and stabilize the tax yield in time of financial strain."

The report contended also that the extent of tax reduction hinges upon how much Federal spending is reduced and how soon.

The recommendations made by this Committee stand out as a warning that Congress, in its search for sufficient revenue to take care of the nation's huge financial needs, may look to the continuation of the present 20% tax on admissions as a dependable, lucrative source. Lest your Congressmen or Senators entertain such a thought, you should get busy now; write to them in protest against even the possibility of a retention of the 20% tax.

The leading exhibitor organizations are watching the tax moves in Washington closely and will do everything in their power to stop a discriminatory tax against motion picture theatres, but their work, if it is to succeed, must be supplemented by the personal effort of every individual engaged in the industry.

## HARRISON'S REPORTS ENDORSES THIS FILM ADVERTISING

This paper has often condemned both sponsored and concealed advertising in films that are exhibited in motion picture theatres; but it endorses heartily the following suggestion contained in a recent bulletin issued by Abram F. Myers, General Counsel of Allied States Association:

"Allied (and other motion picture organizations) have been slow in waking up to the necessity for making better known the Discharged Service Emblem of the Armed Forces. Some business firms have featured the emblem in their advertising, but not enough. Theatres should use it in their advertising wherever possible.

"There is one way in which the exhibitors can make a greater contribution to this cause than all the other industries combined. National Screen Service has a trailer on the subject which deserves to be run in every theatre in the land. It is listed as MS-577, \$4.50.

"Remember, when our men and women return, again to resume civilian life, they lay away their uniforms and decorations and have only the discharge emblem to indicate that 'They Have Served.' Help your patrons to know this emblem by running this trailer on your screen.

"President Smith of Allied has been active in carrying this message to business organizations and advertisers all over the country. Let's match his efforts and do a bang-up job in the theatres!"

## WHY "ZIEGFELD FOLLIES" HAS NOT YET BEEN REVIEWED

In view of the fact that Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "Ziegfeld Follies" has had two recent roadshow engagements (Boston and Pittsburgh), a number of subscribers have written in asking why HARRISON'S REPORTS has not yet published a review of this picture.

At the time the picture opened in Boston about five weeks ago, this paper was informed by the MGM home office officials that both the Boston and Pittsburgh showings were test engagements, and that in all probability the general release prints of the picture would differ in running time and in content from the picture as presented then. Consequently, this paper refrained, for the time being, from reviewing the picture.

We have since learned that, as a result of the two test engagements, MGM has decided to change the continuity of the different sequences in the picture, and is also preparing a new ending. Only when the final release prints are ready will HARRISON'S REPORTS review the picture, so that it can give its subscribers an accurate report of the picture's worth.



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Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1945

No. 39

### ERIC A. JOHNSTON TAKES THE HELM

As most of you already know, last Wednesday Mr. Will H. Hays resigned as head of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, a post he had held since March, 1922, and he was succeeded by Mr. Eric A. Johnston, who, currently serving his fourth term as president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, has gained world-wide repute as a spokesman for and champion of American business.

In assuming leadership of the producers' association, Mr. Johnston outlined his aims in a five-point program, which included (1) the formation of a Motion Picture Institute, through which all branches of the industry can unify their efforts; (2) the inauguration of an expanded, cooperative research program for the improvement of pictures, theatres, methods, and techniques; (3) the breaking down of discriminatory foreign barriers against American motion pictures; (4) the continuation of the industry's established policy of self-discipline for decent, clean, and truthful entertainment; (5) the development of the motion picture as an important adjunct to the nation's educational system.

Of primary interest to the independent exhibitors is Mr. Johnston's proposal for the establishment of a Motion Picture Institute, a sort of all-embracing trade organization, through which all branches of the industry might work cooperatively to the benefit of all. This is what he had to say on the subject:

"War taught the industry the value of united, cooperative effort. All elements of the industry—producers, distributors, exhibitors, representatives of the actors, directors and writers guilds and the craft unions—worked together in the manifold war activities. This cooperative effort must be carried over into the peace. Our purpose is to work with all these elements to form a Motion Picture Institute so that the industry can assume its full share of the responsibility for promoting peace and better living. Nothing like this has ever been attempted in any American industry in peacetime. It is the natural evolution of political into industrial democracy. The motion picture industry can set the example.

"This proposal is merely another way of saying that we Americans must learn to live together, to work together, and above all to talk to one another as though we were residents of the same planet. Unless we do, we might just as well stop prattling about promoting the cause of international peace. An America divided will never lead the way to a world united. We cannot be good neighbors until we learn to get along with ourselves."

As can be gathered from Mr. Johnston's foregoing remarks, what he has to say reveals him to be a man

of lofty ideals, with a broad, progressive viewpoint, the sort that every thinking industryite will welcome.

The time is ripe for a settlement of the industry's internal disputes so that production-distribution and exhibition may march together in harmony towards greater achievements. Perhaps the Motion Picture Institute envisioned by Mr. Johnston will be the means by which unity may be accomplished. This paper will await with interest the details of the plan Mr. Johnston has in mind.

In setting as one of his goals harmonious intra-industry relations, Mr. Johnston was, this paper feels sure, inspired by sincere motives. It is to be hoped that the producer-distributors who employ him will not place obstacles in his path. So long as Mr. Johnson will act constructively, and with just understanding of exhibition's problems, and so long as he will be able to enforce upon the members of his association his views and decisions, the well-thinking element among exhibition will give him full support.

But if Mr. Johnston is to get the full cooperation of the independent exhibitors, he should know something about their background: Years of mistreatment and abuse have made the exhibitors mistrustful of the producer-distributors to a point where they now look with suspicion upon any plan that emanates from the producer-distributor association. When Mr. Hays was brought into the industry as head of the association, he told the independent exhibitors that he was inspired by sincere motives, and he assured them that his one aim was to create a better feeling between the producer-distributors and the exhibitors. He even invited them to come to him if they should be in trouble with the producers. But what did he actually do? He proceeded to try to gain control of the exhibitor organizations, both national and regional, his chief purpose being to prevent the independent exhibitors from organizing too strongly. It would take many pages to recount the abuses suffered by the independent exhibitors during the Hays regime; suffice it to say that they have left the independent exhibitors with the feeling that cooperation with or confidence in the MPPDA will gain them nothing.

It is this lack of confidence, built up steadily over the years, that Mr. Johnston will have to overcome if he is to gain the independent exhibitors' cooperation.

HARRISON'S REPORTS will say to Mr. Johnston substantially what it said to Mr. Hays at the time he took office in 1922: For years the independent exhibitors have suffered from inequitable contracts and from crushing film rentals, due to extravagance in the home offices, as well as waste in the studios, and to the producer-distributors' unquenchable thirst for

(Continued on last page)



**"Man Alive" with Pat O'Brien,  
Adolph Menjou and Ellen Drew**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 75 min.)

This domestic comedy may prove to be fairly amusing program fare to those who are easily entertained or who can put themselves in the mood to accept a thin, nonsensical plot. Many picture-goers, however, may find the action, much of which is broad slapstick, too silly. A few spots are comical; but for the most part the comedy situations are stretched to the point of ridiculousness in order to provoke laughs. It is shameful that the talents of Pat O'Brien should have been wasted in anything so nonsensical as this picture:—

Fancying that Ellen Drew, his wife, was in love with Rudy Vallee, their old college chum, who had come to pay them a visit, Pat O'Brien quarrels with Ellen and leaves home in a huff. He goes to a local saloon, where he becomes thoroughly drunk and changes clothes with a tramp. Both men go for a drive in O'Brien's car, which skids off the road, killing the tramp. O'Brien, hurled into a river, is found unconscious by the crew of a showboat. On the following day, O'Brien learns from the newspapers that the tramp's body had been identified as his, and that it had been buried by Ellen. Aghast at the news, O'Brien confides to Adolph Menjou, the showboat's stoker, that he did not know how to inform Ellen that he was still alive. Menjou suggests that he allow Ellen to believe him dead, so that he could spy on what goes on between her and Vallee. Guided by Menjou, O'Brien visits his home secretly and discovers that Ellen, obeying advice contained in will, had decided to marry Vallee. Still guided by Menjou, O'Brien resorts to "haunting" his wife to warn her against Vallee, but the scheme fails when the family doctor convinces Ellen that his "ghost" was a figment of her imagination. Lest she wed Vallee, O'Brien, in desperation, disguises himself as his "Uncle Barney" from Ireland, whom Ellen had never met, and tries to talk her out of the marriage. Matters become complicated when the real "Uncle Barney" turns up unexpectedly, and when Menjou, taking the situation in hand, leads O'Brien from one jam into another. Eventually, the hoax is revealed, and the finish finds O'Brien and Ellen reunited.

Edwin Harvey Blum wrote the screen play, Robert Fellows produced it, and Ray Enright directed it. The cast includes Fortunio Bonanova, Joseph Crehan, Minna Gombell, Jack Norton and others. Unobjectionable morally.

**"Colonel Effingham's Raid" with  
Charles Coburn, Joan Bennett  
and William Eythe**

(20th Century-Fox, Nov.; time, 70 min.)

A fairly good comedy-drama; it rises above program level because of the box-office draw of the stars. Combining comedy with some romance, the story revolves around a retired army colonel who returns to his small southern home-town only to find it dominated by a group of corrupt politicians. His efforts to awaken the townspeople and to drive the politicians from power are the basis for the comedy. The story is lightweight; but, owing to the good direction, there is so much that the picture has to offer in the way of acting and comedy that one does not mind the lack of a substantial plot. Charles Coburn dominates the proceedings; he makes the retired colonel character believable and likeable:—

After a long and varied career in the army, Coburn returns to Fredericksville, Georgia, to settle down. With the start of hostilities in Europe, however, he decides that he can best serve by writing a daily column of war commentary. He offers his services gratis to Allyn Joslyn, editor of the "Leader," for which William Eythe, Coburn's young cousin, worked as a reporter. Joslyn accepts the offer and gives Coburn wide publicity. But by the time Coburn prepares his initial column, he learns that the town's crooked politicians planned to name a famous town square after a notorious political boss, long dead. Instead of a war column, Coburn writes a scathing denunciation of the politicians, winning the admiration of many citizens. Thus encouraged, he embarks on a campaign aimed at wiping out crooked political machinations, concentrating his efforts to defeat a plan to raze the town's old courthouse, a move designed to enrich the politicians. The townspeople support him, but the crafty politicians block his every move. As a last resort, Coburn seeks the aid of influential business friends, but they, motivated by selfish interests, decline to help. Coburn, unable to bear defeat, becomes ill. Appreciating his sincere efforts, Eythe, who had joined the army, decides to take matters in hand. He rounds up his buddies and, at a public meeting bidding the boys farewell, they hoot the Mayor's trite political mouthings and compel him to grudgingly agree that the courthouse would not be touched until the town's soldiers return from overseas. As the soldiers march out of town, Coburn proudly accepts their salute like a general reviewing his troops.

Kathryn Scola wrote the screen play, Lamar Trotti produced it, and Irving Pichel directed it. The cast includes Frank Craven, Donald Meek and others. Unobjectionable morally.

**"Apology for Murder" with Ann Savage  
and Hugh Beaumont**

(PRC, Sept. 27; time, 68 min.)

The similarity of this grim melodrama to Paramount's "Double Indemnity" is obvious; nevertheless, it should get by as a satisfactory supporting feature, for it has considerable suspense and holds the spectator's attention well. The story, characterizations, and treatment, follow the pattern of "Double Indemnity" in close detail, with the action revolving around an avaricious woman who enlists the aid of her lover in planning and committing her husband's murder, making it look like an accident, in order to obtain his money. The main characters are, of course, ruthless and unsympathetic, and their actions are demoralizing. It is strictly adult fare by virtue of the sordid theme:—

Unable to secure a divorce from Russell Hicks, an elderly financier, Ann Savage starts a flirtation with Hugh Beaumont, a young reporter, and induces him to help her murder Hicks, making it appear as if he had been in a fatal automobile accident. The police, upon finding the body, suspect murder, and they uncover circumstantial evidence that leads them to believe that Pierre Watkin, Hicks' business associate, had committed the crime. Watkin is convicted of the murder and sentenced to die. Charles D. Brown, Beaumont's editor, believing Watkin to be innocent, assigns Bennett to investigate the case and offers to work with him. Meanwhile Ann, having learned that Hicks had left the bulk of his estate to charity, determines to attempt to break the will. Beaumont tries to dissuade her, but she engages Norman Willis, a personable attorney, with whom she immediately begins



a flirtation. Tired of Beaumont, Ann begins to evade him. Beaumont soon comes to the realization that Brown, bent on proving Watkin's innocence, was closing in on him, and that Ann was having an affair with Willis. He goes to her apartment and confronts them both. Ann shoots him, but Beaumont, although mortally wounded, recovers the gun and kills both Ann and Willis. He lives long enough to reach the newspaper office, where he types out a confession of the murders, clearing Watkin.

Fred Myton wrote the "original" screen play, Sigmund Neufeld produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it.

**"Mildred Pierce" with Joan Crawford,  
Jack Carson and Zachary Scott**  
(Warner Bros., Oct. 20; time, 111 min.)

Good. Combining murder mystery and drama, this picture, despite its short-comings, as well as its unpleasantness, will probably do big business, for it has been given a good production and holds one's interest throughout. The story, which revolves around a mother's sacrifices for an ungrateful, wayward daughter, lacks conviction, and the main characterizations are overdrawn. For example, the daughter's hatred for her mother has no logical basis, consequently, it weakens the story. Joan Crawford, as the sacrificing mother, gives a good performance; thanks to her artistry, one can at times forget the artificialities of the plot. But Ann Blythe, as the venomous daughter, fails to give credence to the part; she overacts throughout. Deft handling of the flashback technique gives the story considerable suspense. Because of some suggestive situations, and of the story's unpleasantness, it is not a picture for children, and hardly suitable for adolescents.

The story begins with the mysterious murder of Zachary Scott, Joan's second husband, and with her obvious attempt to make it appear as if Jack Carson, an old acquaintance, who had long desired her, had committed the crime. Joan, together with Bruce Bennett, her first husband, and Carson, are taken into custody by Inspector Moroni Olson, who shrewdly draws from Joan the events leading up to the crime. Joan reveals that she and Bennett had separated because of his attentions to another woman. Ambitious for her two daughters, she had worked as a waitress and had baked pies on the side to earn enough money to give them the finer things in life. Eventually, with the aid of Carson, her husband's former partner, she had opened her own restaurant in a building leased on favorable terms from Zachary Scott, decadent scion of a once wealthy family, with whom she had become infatuated. Her business had thrived, and she had become wealthy. Her younger daughter had died, but she had supported her sixteen-year-old daughter (Ann Blythe) in grand style. She had supported Scott, too, but dropped him when he had virtually become a "kept" man. She and Ann had become estranged when the girl, whose wayward tendencies she could not control, had deliberately blackmailed a wealthy young man into marriage to gain a huge settlement for an annulment. But she could not stand being separated from Ann, and to provide her with an expensive home and with a social life that would appeal to her, she had bribed Scott into marrying her so that Ann would come to live with them. On the night of a party in Ann's honor, she had learned that Scott and Carson had sold their interests in her business, ruining her financially. She had gone home to remonstrate with Scott only to find him making love to Ann.

Caught, Scott had disavowed having any love for Ann. The young girl, infuriated, had shot him dead. Joan admits that, in an effort to save Ann, she tricked Carson into going to the house so that he would be discovered with the body. The police apprehend Ann and jail her.

Ranald MacDougall and Catherine Turney wrote the screen play based on the novel by James M. Cain. Jerry Wald produced it, and Michael Curtiz directed it. The cast includes Butterfly McQueen, Eve Arden, Jo Ann Marlowe and others.

**"The Dolly Sisters" with Betty Grable,  
June Haver and John Payne**

(20th Century-Fox, Nov.; time, 114 min.)

Twentieth Century-Fox has a "winner" in this latest of its Technicolor musicals, which is invested with the nostalgic settings and music of days gone by. Although one may question the accuracy of the story, which is supposedly biographical of the famed Dolly Sisters, it should go over big with the multitude, for it is warm, romantic, comical, peppy, and tuneful. The production values are up to the customary lavish standard set by this company for musicals of this type, and the staging of the different musical sequences, particularly the "Darktown Strutter's Ball" number, is novel and ingenious. Betty Grable and June Haver, as the sisters, do good work in all departments — singing, dancing, and acting. The others in the cast perform acceptably, with S. Z. Sakall, as the sisters' guardian uncle, provoking many laughs by his excitable mannerisms.

The story opens in 1904 with the sisters' arrival in New York from Hungary as children. 1912 finds Jenny (Betty Grable) and Rosie (June Haver), both eighteen years old, working as entertainers in a small cafe. They succeed in obtaining a booking on a vaudeville bill in Elmira, where they meet Harry Fox (John Payne), a struggling song-and-dance man, who falls in love with Jenny. Recognizing the girls' exceptional talent, Fox takes them in hand and, through a ruse, arranges for Oscar Hammerstein to hear them sing. Hammerstein, delighted with their performance, signs them to a contract. Both soar to stardom. Fox, too, becomes a success as a songwriter, and before long he and Jenny marry. With the coming of the war in 1917, Fox enlists. Jenny, alone, is persuaded by Rosie to resume their dual career. The sisters go to Europe for a tour, and the Armistice finds them more famous than ever because of their outstanding successes. Fox, with the army of occupation, is finally given his release, and on his way home stops off in Paris to take Jenny back with him. Jenny, having signed a new contract with the Folies Bergere, finds herself torn between loyalty to Rosie and her love for Fox. She decides to remain in Paris to fulfill the contract, but, despite her tearful protestations of love, Fox tells her to get a divorce. In the few years that follow the sisters become the toast of the Continent until Jenny is injured in an auto crash. At her insistence, Rosie marries Irving Netcher (Frank Latimore), a wealthy young American, and returns to the United States. In 1921, Jenny, recovered from her injuries but in financial straits, returns to New York. There, on an all-star benefit show, in which Fox, too, was appearing, both are reunited.

John Larkin and Marian Spitzer wrote the screen play, George Jessel produced it, and Irving Cummings directed it. The cast includes Reginald Gardiner, Gene Sheldon, Sig Ruman, Trudy Marshall and others. Unobjectionable morally.



excessive profits. Before cooperation can be extended, therefore, Mr. Johnston must endeavor to make the members of his organization see the errors of their ways. He must try to secure for the exhibitors contracts that are equitable, and a reduction in film rentals to conform with current economic conditions. Upon Mr. Johnston's determination to be fair and upon his ability to enforce on the producer-distributors his views, will depend the extent of cooperation that may be expected from independent exhibition.

Mr. Johnston comes into the industry unhampered by past affiliations. He has a chance to do constructive work and to bring a better understanding among all elements of the industry. He is a man of unusual ability, and given half a chance he may be able to bring order out of chaos.

HARRISON'S REPORTS extends its congratulations to Mr. Johnston and wishes him every success.

### A NEW NAME NEEDED

Mr. Johnston's appointment as head of the MPPDA brings up the rather important question of whether or not that association will still be referred to as "The Hays Office."

The MPPDA, as most of you know, stands for Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, but, because it is a long title, and because of the difficulty of both remembering and pronouncing the initials, the organization has been generally referred to, within and without the industry, as "The Hays Office."

Within the industry, it would probably make little difference if it were still called the "Hays Office." But it does make a difference outside the industry, for the public's conception of "The Hays Office," brought about by motion picture critics who have often disagreed with the industry's Production Code, is that of a narrow-minded, prudish censorship body. Accordingly, it would be unfair to Mr. Johnston to refer to him as the new head of "The Hays Office."

The situation calls for an outstanding public relations job aimed at inducing the press to stop referring to the organization as the "Hays Office," which, to quote from a recent editorial in one of the trade papers, carries for the public "the mental picture of an ogre with mastodonic shears and minuscule spectacles."

HARRISON'S REPORTS does not wish to appear presumptuous by suggesting what the new name for MPPDA should be, but it believes that a suitable name can be found without much difficulty. Here is a good job for the Public Information Committee of the MPPDA.

### AN EIGHT BILLION DOLLAR DROP

Early this week, the Department of Commerce announced that, as a result of the nation's shift from a war-time to a peace-time economy, income payments to individuals during the last six months of this year will be eight billion dollars less than in the first six months.

The decline, warned the Department, is bound to have an effect on retail trade but not to the extent normally expected, since consumers have plenty of money with which to buy the many commodities that they were deprived of during the war.

Eight billion dollars less income to individuals

during a six-months period is indeed a staggering sum. And, since the Department states that the decline will show up chiefly in the volume of wages paid in manufacturing industries, it means that the wage-earner in the lower-income brackets—the main source of the motion picture industry's revenue—will be affected most.

For some months now, even before the end of the war, HARRISON'S REPORTS has cautioned you about the necessity of exercising extreme care as to the prices you should pay for the new season's product. It should not be necessary for this paper to continue cautioning you, for most of you are well acquainted with the prevailing business conditions, which are being made worse by the wave of strikes that is engulfing many sections of the country.

At times, however, an exhibitor forgets himself and allows a glib salesman to make him believe that his company's pictures are so good that even depressed economic conditions will not affect their potential drawing power in the least. It is such an exhibitor who needs continuous cautioning and who needs to be reminded that even the best pictures suffer at the box-office when the majority of picture-goers undergo undue economic stress.

It is not a case of business being poor; the problem facing most low-wage earners today is how to meet the high cost of living, which is way out of proportion with their decreased incomes. And, when a breadwinner has to skimp to make both ends meet, you may be sure that neither he nor the members of his family are going to sacrifice the necessities of life for motion picture entertainment, desirable though it may be.

Do not let the salesmen make you believe that business will resume its high tempo of the war years within the next few months, for, due to the strikes, involving virtually every major industry, the post-war period of prosperity, which many people have been waiting for, may be long delayed in its arrival.

Use good judgment now in what you pay for pictures and avoid regrets afterwards.

### SEEKING EQUALITY

Lashing out against distributor discrimination against independent exhibitors in permitting affiliated theatres and large independent circuits to book two top features on a double bill, the Pacific Coast Conferences of Independent Theatre Owners adopted the following resolution at a recent meeting:

"Whereas it is becoming increasingly apparent that a discriminatory sales policy exists whereby affiliated theatres and large independent circuits are able to run two A bracket pictures on the same double bill program; whereas terms demanded from independent exhibitors prohibit them from showing the same identical two feature pictures together on a double bill program, and

"Whereas such a practice is injurious and discriminatory to independent theatres because the terms and allocations demanded of them do not allow them to participate in same booking and playing privilege.

"Therefore, be it resolved that PCCITO demand that all distributors modify their terms and allocations to independent exhibitors on all such feature pictures booked as outlined above so as to enable them to be given an equal opportunity to book and play said pictures on the same basis."



Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

# HARRISON'S REPORTS

**Yearly Subscription Rates:**

United States .....	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions.	16.50
Canada .....	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain .....	15.75
Australia, New Zealand,	
India, Europe, Asia ....	17.50
35c a Copy	

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## THE NEW YORK TRIAL ABOUT TO OPEN

During the past few months, there have been constant rumors of a possible settlement between the Government and the consenting distributors in connection with the New York anti-trust suit. Nothing, however, has come of these rumors, and, at this writing, it seems quite definite that the trial will get under way on Monday, October 8, as scheduled.

Whatever compromise talk remained in the air was dispelled last week in statements made by representatives of both sides.

For the Government, Wendell Berge, head of the Department of Justice's anti-trust division, is reported to have indicated, following a pre-trial meeting last Monday with the distributors' attorneys, that proposals for a compromise or for a new consent decree had been made in August and September, but that no agreement had been reached and that nothing had been submitted in writing. Berge pointed out that the Government has not closed the door to a satisfactory settlement of the suit, and that it was always ready to listen to new proposals, but he emphasized the fact that any new proposals must embody the principles of theatre divorcement.

For the distributors, Austin C. Keough, Paramount's general counsel, and official spokesman for the distributor-defendants on many occasions, stated this week in an interview with *Motion Picture Daily* that the possibility of a compromise settlement, either before the trial starts, or during the trial, is ruled out so long as the Department of Justice insists that theatre divorcement is the minimum that it will accept.

Accordingly, so long as an impasse exists between both sides on the issue of theatre divorcement, one can expect that the case will be fought out to a final determination by the court.

Just how long the trial may last cannot be estimated. It will, undoubtedly, require many months. You may be sure, however, that it will move swiftly, for, since the case has been certified by the Attorney General as being of general public importance, the three-judge statutory court appointed to hear the trial will not tolerate the legalistic antics by which the case has been prolonged since it was first filed in 1938.

There are some exhibitors who feel that settlement of the case through a new consent decree would be desirable, but in the opinion of prominent exhibitor leaders, the vast majority of independent exhibitors feel that the only way to restore free enterprise and open competition among all branches of the industry is for the Government to prosecute the suit to a finish. A new consent decree would, after all, be just a

compromise, and in all probability it would fall far short of eliminating the unfair practices against which the suit is aimed. And so long as those practices remain, the motion picture industry will continue to be in a turmoil. If we are to have peace and unity, the issues between exhibition on the one hand, and production-distribution on the other hand, must be defined clearly, and decided beyond any further doubt.

## UNHEALTHY CONFUSION

According to a report in weekly *Variety*, many industryites are willing to concede that the current, excessive practice of reissuing pictures, featuring stars who are present-day attractions, may result in good grosses on the basis of current box-office returns, but they believe that, in the long run, the practice will hurt the potential grosses of some new product.

One of several examples, reports *Variety*, is a situation in Boston, where first-run houses, playing reissues on double-bills, have done outstanding business. Last week, when Twentieth Century Fox's Technicolor musical, "State Fair," opened in one of the important theatres in Boston many people telephoned to ask if Will Rogers was starred in the picture. The Boston picture-goers had become so accustomed to seeing reissues booked in their favorite theatres that they took it for granted that the new version of "State Fair" was a reissue of the original, which, as most of you remember, starred the late Will Rogers.

*Variety* reports also that producers are viewing the situation with alarm, thus indicating that some of them, planning to remake box-office pictures of past years, have begun to fear the possibility of their new productions being mistaken for reissues. And if the remakes should be produced under the original titles, their fears are well founded.

It would indeed be ironical if the producers, after having turned the reissue market into one of their most profitable sidelines by virtue of the artificial product shortage they control, should find that they had created a condition that may have a decided effect on the potential grosses of remakes, particularly where the box-office attraction should depend to a large extent on the drawing power of well known titles.

Before booking remakes, the exhibitor should give this condition careful thought. If reissues have been running rampant in your territory, it may be necessary for you to take pains to inform your customers that a particular remake playing in your theatre is not a reissue. You cannot afford to lose business merely because your patrons have no way to distinguish new pictures from old ones.

(Continued on last page)



### **"The Spanish Main" with Maureen O'Hara and Paul Henreid**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 101 min.)

A very good pirate adventure melodrama; it has all the ingredients one expects to find and enjoy in a costume picture of this type—swashbuckling, cut-throat buccaneers, exciting sea battles, daring sword duels, a tyrannical Spanish governor, a fearless hero, and the inevitable fair damsel in distress. And all this in attractive Technicolor photography, which adds much to the costuming and to the elaborate backgrounds. The story is fanciful but interesting, has good comedy relief, and many thrilling situations throughout. It should appeal to men and women alike, for it is a deft blend of action and romance. Paul Henreid is quite dashing as the pirate chief, and Maureen O'Hara makes a beautiful heroine. Walter Slezak is properly villainous as the cruel, treacherous governor. Binnie Barnes, as a female pirate, is outstanding. One situation, a wedding night sequence, is rather suggestive:—

On his way to America to start a new colony, Paul Henreid, a Dutch merchantman, is captured by the Spaniards and imprisoned by Walter Slezak, the Governor of New Granada. Henreid manages to escape. He turns to piracy in a determination to one day take his revenge on Slezak. The opportunity presents itself when he captures a Spanish galleon bearing Maureen O'Hara, a noblewoman, who was on her way to marry Slezak. Henreid compels Maureen to become his bride, but does not consummate the marriage because of her contemptuous attitude towards him. Aware the Slezak would pay one well to arrange Maureen's escape, John Emory, Henreid's treacherous lieutenant, enlists the aid of Binnie Barnes, a woman pirate, who loved Henreid, and together they successfully shanghai the pirate leader, seize his vessel, and sail it to Slezak's island. Maureen, who by this time had fallen in love with Henreid, meets Slezak for the first time and finds him revolting. Meanwhile Henreid obtains another ship and determines to retrieve his wife. Slezak unable to wed Maureen until Henreid was disposed of, resorts to trickery to lure him to his palace. Henreid, aware of the danger, accepts the challenge. He falls into a trap, however, and is thrown into jail together with the pirates who had betrayed him only to find that they, too, were to be burned at the stake. Overwhelmed by her fear for Henreid's safety, Maureen flirts with the jail keeper and succeeds in releasing Henreid and the others from their cells. In the melee that follows, the pirates, led by Henreid, overpower the palace guards and make their way to Henreid's ship, which Slezak had outfitted as a honeymoon yacht and on which he awaited Maureen. The pirates subdue the crewmen, and Slezak himself dies from a wound inflicted by Maureen. Henreid sets sail for the New World, where he and Maureen planned a new life together.

George Worthing Yates and Herman J. Mankiewicz wrote the screen play, Robert Fellows and Stephen Ames produced it, and Frank Borzage directed it. The cast includes Barton MacLane, J. M. Kerrigan, Fritz Leiber and others.

### **"Hold That Blonde" with Eddie Bracken and Veronica Lake**

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 77 min.)

A slapstick entertainment that does not rise above the level of program fare. It belongs in the class of nonsensical comedies that amuse some patrons but bore others. The action revolves around a wealthy

kleptomaniac who gets himself into all sorts of complications when he becomes innocently involved with a gang of jewel thieves. The story is a hodge-podge of nonsense, and it depends for its laughs mostly on broad slapstick situations, some of which are amusing, but most of which are ineffective because they are too long drawn out. Because of the silliness of the story, there is little human interest. One feels no sympathy for Eddie Bracken, as the kleptomaniac, for, although he means no harm, he is presented as a "sap." One "cliff-hanging" sequence, where Bracken tangles with a drunkard on the ledge of a high building, is highly comical even though it has been done many times:—

Disturbed by his uncontrollable desire to steal, Eddie Bracken, a wealthy young man, visits a psychiatrist. He is told that his kleptomania resulted from a broken love affair, and is advised that his best chance for a cure was to find a new romance. On his way home, Bracken bumps into Veronica Lake and steals her compact, which contained the combination to a safe in which a valuable diamond necklace was concealed. Through a series of circumstances, Veronica, against her will, had become associated with a gang of jewel thieves, who planned to steal the necklace. She traces Bracken to his home and, believing that he, too, was a crook, demands that he return her compact. Just then, Inspector Albert Dekker, who had been following Veronica, enters the apartment. Compelled to explain her presence in town, Veronica throws her arms around Bracken and informs Dekker that she had returned to marry him. Dekker, satisfied leaves. Bracken, confused but pleased at this turn of events, sees in Veronica a chance for the romance that would cure him of kleptomania. He pursues her and, despite her pleas that he stay away from her, determines to prevent her from stealing the necklace lest she be caught by the police. As a result, he becomes involved in numerous chases with the jewel thieves and with insurance detectives guarding the necklace, finally finding it necessary to steal the necklace himself to keep Veronica out of trouble. After many more mix-ups, he returns the necklace to its owner and inadvertently aids the police in trapping the thieves. Veronica, convinced that Bracken was a kleptomaniac and not a crook, agrees to marry him.

Walter DeLeon, Earl Baldwin, and E. Edwin Moran wrote the screen play, George Marshall produced it, and Paul Jones directed it. The cast includes Frank Fenton, George Zucco, Donald MacBride, Willie Best and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Shadow of Terror" with Richard Fraser and Grace Gillern**

(PRC, Nov. 5; time, 63 min.)

The value of this picture lies in the exploitation possibilities it offers on account of the fact that the story is tied in with the atomic bomb. Otherwise, it is just a fair program melodrama, with enough action and suspense to satisfy indiscriminating audiences. The story is the old one about foreign agents seeking to steal a valuable secret formula, and its treatment is quite ordinary, but its connection with the atomic bomb has been worked into the plot cleverly, making the picture both timely and exploitable. At the finish, newsreel clips of the actual atomic bomb test have been used to good advantage:—

En route to Washington with a secret formula dealing with the atomic bomb, Richard Fraser, a chemist, is attacked by Kenneth MacDonald and Eddie Acuff, henchmen of Cy Kendall, an unscrupulous inventor,



who sought the formula for a foreign power. They steal Fraser's briefcase and throw his unconscious form from the moving train. Fraser is found by Grace Gillhern, a pretty ranch owner, and by Emmett Lynn, her foreman, who take him to the ranch and nurse him back to health. Although his wounds heal, Fraser suffers from amnesia. Meanwhile Kendall had discovered that the formula he had stolen was worthless, because of a missing ingredient known only to Fraser. He institutes a search for Fraser and learns that he was living on Grace's ranch. His henchmen, posing as FBI agents, go to the ranch and ask Fraser to accompany them to Washington, but during the conversation they give themselves away as imposters. Suspicious of their motives, but unaware of their reason for wanting him, Fraser, accompanied by Grace, flees into the hills while the ranch foreman hurries to the sheriff for help. Both are captured before help arrives, and are taken to Kendall's secret home in the desert. Refusing to believe that Fraser had lost his memory, Kendall beats him brutally in an effort to make him reveal the secret. As a result of the blows on his head, Fraser regains his memory, but he determines not to divulge the formula. Kendall, exasperated, forces the couple out into the hot desert and, after both are weak from fatigue and thirst, tempts them with food and drink in an effort to make Fraser talk. Meanwhile the ranch foreman and the sheriff had commandeered a plane to search the desert for the missing couple. Fraser, sighting the plane, cleverly manages to imprint an SOS sign on the sand. Recognizing the signal, the sheriff lands the plane, rescues the couple, and captures the gang.

Arthur St. Claire wrote the screen play, Jack Grant produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### "The Stork Club" with Betty Hutton and Barry Fitzgerald

(Paramount, Dec. 28; time, 98 min.)

A good light entertainment, with music. The combination of Betty Hutton and Barry Fitzgerald is almost enough to assure one of entertainment, even with a mediocre story. This story, however, although implausible, is pleasingly agreeable, and both players are excellent; they provide the audience with many laughs because of the comic involvements of the plot, and with some appealing moments because of their kindly feelings towards each other. As a hat-check girl who suddenly finds that an unknown benefactor had opened charge accounts for her in the city's swankiest shops, Betty Hutton gives an ingratiating performance; she gives life and feeling to the role. She also puts over a few songs with effectiveness. Fitzgerald, as her unknown benefactor, a millionaire who poses as a vagrant and allows Betty to befriend him, is exceptionally amusing. Most of the comedy is caused by Betty's inability to explain the source of her sudden wealth to her boy friend. A considerable part of the action takes place in New York's famed Stork Club, which has been reproduced in exact detail. Throughout the story there are subtle advertising plugs both for the Stork Club and Sherman Billingsley, its owner:—

Fitzgerald, a crochety millionaire, falls into the ocean from a pier and is rescued by Betty. Assuming that he was a vagrant, and that he had tried to commit suicide, Betty consoles him by promising to obtain a job for him at the Stork Club, where she worked as a hat-check girl. Fitzgerald, impressed by

Betty's kindness, instructs his lawyer (Robert Benchley) to install her in a swanky apartment and to provide her with unlimited charge accounts, but warns him not to reveal the identity of her benefactor. On the following day, Fitzgerald, dressed in shabby clothes, arrives at the club just as Betty receives word from Benchley of her good fortune. Betty, incredulous, goes out on a buying spree and insists that Fitzgerald make his home with her in the new apartment. Happy but disturbed over the mysterious identity of her benefactor, Betty comes to the conclusion that he was the owner of the club in the mistaken belief that he had designs on her. Matters become complicated when Don Defore, her boy-friend, a band-leader, returns from overseas; unable to give him a plausible explanation of her new-found wealth, Betty lies to him. Defore refuses to believe her, and other incidents lead him to suspect that Fitzgerald was her "sugar daddy." Although they become estranged, Betty uses her influence to obtain an engagement at the Stork Club for Defore and his band. Matters become even more confusing for Betty when Mary Young, Fitzgerald's wife, from whom he had separated, barges into the apartment and accuses her of stealing her husband. Betty explains the situation, and, upon learning that Fitzgerald was her benefactor, she schemes with Miss Young to effect a reconciliation with both their men. They enlist the aid of Benchley, and their plan works to perfection. The closing scenes find both couples embracing.

Buddy G. DeSylva and John McGowan wrote the screen play, and Mr. DeSylva produced it. Hal Walker directed it. Harold Wilson was associate producer. The cast includes Andy Russell, Bill Goodwin and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933, OF HARRISON'S REPORTS, published Weekly at New York, N. Y., for Oct. 1, 1945.

State of New York.

County of New York.

Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Al Picoult, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Managing Editor of the HARRISON'S REPORTS and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager, are:

Publisher, *Harrison's Reports, Inc.*, 1270 6th Ave., New York 20, N. Y.

Editor, *P. S. Harrison*, 1270 6th Ave., New York 20, N. Y.

Managing Editor, *Al Picoult*, 1270 6th Ave., New York 20, N. Y.

Business Manager, *None*.

2. That the owner is: *Harrison's Reports, Inc.*, 1270 6th Ave., New York 20, N. Y.

*P. S. Harrison*, 1270 6th Ave., New York 20, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent, or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: *None*.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation, has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

(Signed) AL PICOULT,  
(Managing Editor).

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 28th day of September, 1945.

MODESTO F. HELMSTEDT,  
(My commission expires March 30, 1946.)



Here is a problem that should be met, not only by the exhibitor, but also by the distributor. Advertising expense that may be required to inform the public that a remake is not a reissue should not be borne by the exhibitor alone; it should either be shared by the distributor, or an allowance made in the film rental.

### **DON'T OPERATE YOUR THEATRE FOR POPCORN PROFITS**

In a recent bulletin sent to his exhibitor members, Leo F. Wolcott, president of the Allied Independent Theatre Owners of Iowa-Nebraska, gives them the following sage advice:

"As our box-office receipts drop with the return to normal times, unemployment (and the strikes which now face us), drop in farm prices, etc. (eggs are already half what they were 2 months ago), lower film prices and terms are a MUST! And the exhibitor who has let his film prices run away from him during the war years has a mighty big job facing him! I well remember traveling through the Middle West following my resignation from the Navy in 1921, and the terrible conditions in theatre business then, the mere handfuls of people that attended the theatres, even at a dime admission. DON'T let it catch YOU this time; it'll break you like it did most independent exhibitors then. Watch your receipts with an eagle eye; KNOW YOUR OVERHEAD . . . and buy your films so you, too, can retain a profit! Remember, this is probably the only business in the world where the GOOD CUSTOMER gets the axe! All other lines give special discounts to their best customers; we get only the demand for ever HIGHER terms! If they don't sell you so you can make a profit too, maybe you're too good a customer, maybe you should try some other company awhile! Don't be silly enough to operate your theatre for the popcorn profits only. Some exhibitors are doing that, no kidding!"

### **"Wanderer of the Wasteland" with James Warren and Audrey Long** (RKO, no release date set; time, 67 min.)

A routine program western melodrama; it lacks the speed and pep that characterizes most pictures of this type. There is nothing original about either the plot or the manner in which it has been developed, nor does the action cause much excitement, yet it should manage to hold the attention of the non-discriminating fans fairly well, for it has some suspense and human interest. James Warren, in the title role, is undistinguished but likeable. It has some comedy and a fairly pleasant romance:—

As a lad of twelve, James Warren is orphaned when his father is slain on the Mojave Desert mysteriously. He is rescued by a kindly middle-aged couple, who adopt him as a companion to their young son (Richard Martin). Grown to manhood, Warren devotes his time searching for the man who murdered his father, his only clue being a brand that was on the the killer's horse. One day, while stopping at a small Arizona town, Warren encounters Audrey Long, whose luggage bore the tell-tale brand. Accompanied by Martin, he follows Audrey to her uncle's ranch, where he gets into an argument with Robert Clarke, her disreputable brother. Robert Barrat, the uncle, admires Warren and offers him the job of keeping Clarke away from the gambling tables in a local saloon. Warren falls in love with Audrey, but he avoids her because of the grimness of his mission.

Meanwhile, he incurs the enmity of Harry Woods, the ranch foreman, who hoped to make Audrey his wife. Warren eventually becomes convinced that Audrey's uncle was the man who murdered his father. Barrat, compelled to confess, admits the killing and explains that Warren's father had stolen his girl (Warren's mother). Warren, influenced by his love for Audrey, is unable to bring himself to take revenge on Barrat. He leaves the ranch hurriedly. Seeing an opportunity to get rid of his rival for good, Woods kills the uncle and makes it appear as if Warren had committed the crime. Warren, arrested, is freed from jail by Martin. He kidnaps Woods and takes him to the desert, where he forces a confession from him. His name cleared, Warren reunites with Audrey, and both determine to forget the past.

Norman Houston wrote the screen play based on the novel by Zane Grey. Herman Schlom produced it, and Edward Kelly and Wallace Grissell directed it. Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Sunbonnet Sue" with Gale Storm and Phil Regan**

(Monogram, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

Good. There is nothing exciting, novel, or suspenseful about the story, which has as its setting New York's Bowery during the "gay nineties," but it blends comedy, romance, human interest, and nostalgic, sentimental songs in so pleasing a fashion that most spectators will find it a very satisfactory entertainment. Moreover, the production values are good, the backgrounds colorful, and the acting commendable. Gale Storm is as charming as ever, and her singing of a few numbers give the picture some of its most pleasant moments. Phil Regan, too, pleases one with his singing. As Gale's stubborn Irish father, a saloon keeper, George Cleveland gives a rich characterization, provoking many hearty laughs. Others contributing amusing characterizations include Alan Mowbray, Raymond Hatton, and Charles D. Brown:—

Gale, who worked as a singer in her father's saloon, is in love with Regan, a young attorney, who, backed by Cleveland, was running for Alderman of the district. Edna Holland, Gale's social-climbing aunt, disapproved of Gale's working in a saloon lest it be found out and ruin her own social career. To get Gale away from the saloon, the aunt contributes enough money to secure the election of Regan's opponent, who returns the favor by closing up Cleveland's place. Gale and her father are soon reduced to poverty. To restore her father's license, Gale agrees to give up her singing career and to move into her aunt's exclusive Murray Hill home. She leaves Regan and Cleveland without telling them of her whereabouts. On the night the aunt gives a coming out party for Gale, Cleveland learns of it. He crashes into the aunt's mansion determined to take Gale back to the Bowery. During the brawl that ensues, the Governor and his wife (Minna Gombell) arrive. The aunt, mortified, has visions of her social standing crashing. But it turns out that the Governor's wife and Cleveland had grown up together on the Bowery. Their close friendship not only helps Cleveland to regain his license, but also helps the social standing of the aunt, who sees the value of changing her ways.

Ralph Murphy and Richard A. Carroll wrote the screen play, Scott R. Dunlap produced it, and Mr. Murphy directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXVII

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1945

No. 40

(Partial Index No. 5—Pages 130 to 156 Incl.)

<i>Titles of Pictures</i>	<i>Reviewed on Page</i>
Abbott and Costello in Hollywood—MGM (84 min.)	135
Apology for Murder—PRC (68 min.)	154
Bandits of the Badlands—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
Behind City Lights—Republic (68 min.)	150
Blazing the Western Trail—Columbia (55 m.)	not reviewed
Blithe Spirit—United Artists (94 min.)	150
Border Badman—PRC (59 min.)	not reviewed
Colonel Effingham's Raid—20th Century-Fox (70 m.)	154
Come Out Fighting—Monogram (62 min.)	142
Doctor's Courage, The—Columbia (see "Crime Doctor's Courage")	36
Dolly Sisters, The—20th Century-Fox (114 min.)	155
Duffy's Tavern—Paramount (97 min.)	131
Enchanted Forest, The—MGM (79 min.)	151
Fatal Witness, The—Republic (59 min.)	134
Fighting Bill Carson—PRC (55 min.)	not reviewed
First Yank Into Tokyo—RKO (82 min.)	143
Flaming Bullets—PRC (61 min.)	not reviewed
Follow That Woman—Paramount (70 min.)	130
Gay Senorita, The—Columbia (70 min.)	138
Girl of the Limberlost—Columbia (60 min.)	142
House on 92nd Street—20th Century-Fox (91 min.)	147
I Love a Bandleader—Columbia (71 min.)	130
Indiscretion—Warner Bros. (see "Christmas in Connecticut")	115
Isle of the Dead—RKO (71 min.)	138
Love, Honor and Goodbye—Republic (88 min.)	146
Love Letters—Paramount (99 min.)	135
Lost Trail, The—Monogram (53 min.)	not reviewed
Lost Weekend, The—Paramount (99 min.)	131
Man Alive—RKO (75 min.)	154
Marshal of Laredo—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
Men in Her Diary—Universal (73 min.)	146
Men of the Deep—Columbia (see "Rough, Tough and Ready")	38
Mildred Pierce—Warner Bros. (111 min.)	155
Outlaws of the Rockies—Columbia (55 min.)	not reviewed
Pardon My Past—Columbia (88 min.)	151
Paris Underground—United Artists (97 min.)	134
Phantom of the Plains—Republic (55 min.)	not reviewed
River Gang—Universal (63 min.)	146
Saddle Serenade—Monogram (56 min.)	not reviewed
Shady Lady—Universal (93 min.)	143
Shanghai Cobra, The—Monogram (63 min.)	126
Sporting Chance, A—Republic (56 min.)	142
State Fair—20th Century-Fox (100 min.)	134
Strange Affair of Uncle Harry, The—Universal (80m.)	127
Sunset in Eldorado—Republic (65 min.)	not reviewed
Swingin' On a Rainbow—Republic (72 min.)	138
Tell It to a Star—Republic (67 min.)	130
Ten Little Niggers—20th Century-Fox (see "And Then There Were None")	110
That Night With You—Universal (84 min.)	150
Three's A Crowd—Republic (58 min.)	147

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

## Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

6029 Ten Cents a Dance—Frazee-Lloyd	June 7
6223 Rhythm Round-Up—West. musical (66m.)	June 7
6036 Blonde from Brooklyn—Stanton-Merrick	June 21
6030 Boston Blackie's Rendezvous—Morris	July 5

6004 A Thousand and One Nights—Wilde-Keyes	July 26
6042 You Can't Do Without Love—Lynn-Stewart	July 26
6020 The Gay Senorita—Falkenburg-Bannon	Aug. 9
6208 Rustlers of the Badlands—Starrett (58m.)	Aug. 16
6001 Over 21—Dunne-Knox	Aug. 23
6027 Adventures of Rusty—Donaldson-Nagel	Sept. 6
6015 I Love a Bandleader—Harris—"Rochester"	Sept. 13
6209 Outlaws of the Rockies—Starrett (55 min.)	Sept. 19
Song of the Prairie—Western musical	Sept. 27
She Wouldn't Say Yes—Russell-Bowman	Nov. Specials
A Song to Remember—Muni-Oberon	Mar. 1
Kiss and Tell—Temple-Abel	Oct. 18
(End of 1944-45 Season)	

## Beginning of 1945-46 Season

Crime Doctor's Warning—Warner Baxter	Oct. 11
Girl of the Limberlost—Nelson-Clifton	Oct. 18
7201 Blazing the Western Trail—Starrett (55 m.)	Oct. 18
Voice of the Whistler—Dix-Merrick	Oct. 30
Prison Ship—Lowery-Foch	Nov. 15
Lawless Empire—Charles Starrett	Nov. 15
Snafu—Parks-Lloyd	Nov. 22
My Name is Julia Ross—Foch-Macready	Nov. 27
Hit the Hay—Canova-Hunter	Nov. 29

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

## Block 12

528 Thrill of a Romance—Johnson-Williams	July
529 Twice Blessed—Lee and Lynn Wilde	July
530 Bewitched—Thaxter-Gwenn	July
Specials	
500 Dragon Seed—Hepburn-Huston	Aug. '44
511 Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo—Tracy-Johnson	January
512 Meet Me in St. Louis—Garland-O'Brien	January
521 National Velvet—Rooney-Taylor	April
527 Valley of Decision—Garson-Peck	June
531 Anchors Aweigh—Kelly-Sinatra-Grayson	Aug. '45
(End of 1944-45 Season)	

## Beginning of 1945-46 Season

## Block 13

600 Our Vines Have Tender Grapes—Robinson-O'Brien	Sept.
601 The Hidden Eye—Edward Arnold	Sept.
602 Abbott & Costello in Hollywood	Oct.
603 Her Highness & the Bellboy—Lamar-Walker	Oct.
604 Dangerous Partners—Craig-Hasso	Oct.
Specials	
605 Weekend at the Waldorf—All star	Oct.

## Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

462 Springtime in Texas—Wakely (57 min.)	June 2
424 Trouble Chasers—Howard-Gilbert	June 2
451 Flame of the West—Brown-Woodbury (70m.)	June 9
411 Muggs Rides Again—East Side Kids	June 16
405 China's Little Devils—Carey-Kelly	July 14
456 Stranger from Santa Fe—J. M. Brown (53 min.)	Aug. 4
463 Saddle Serenade—Wakely (56 min.)	Aug. 11
404 Divorce—Francis-Cabot	Aug. 18
415 The Shanghai Cobra—Toler	Sept. 1
431 South of the Rio Grande—Renaldo	Sept. 8
457 The Lost Trail—J. M. Brown (53 min.)	Sept. 15
464 Riders of the Dawn—Wakely	Sept. 22
412 Come Out Fighting—East Side Kids	Sept. 29

**Paramount Features**

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

## Block 6

- 4426 Out of this World—Bracken-Lynn.....July 13  
 4427 Midnight Manhunt—Gargan-Savage  
 (formerly "One Exciting Night") .....July 27  
 4428 You Came Along—Scott-Cummings .....Sept. 14  
 Special  
 4431 Incendiary Blonde—Hutton-De Cordova...Aug. 31  
 Reissues  
 4432 Sign of the Cross—Colbert-March..No nat'l rel. date  
 4433 Northwest Mounted Police—Cooper-Carroll..Aug. 26  
 4434 This Gun for Hire—Ladd-Lake.....Aug. 26  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

## Block 1

- 4501 Duffy's Tavern—Ed Gardner .....Sept. 28  
 4504 Love Letters—Jones-Cotton .....Oct. 26  
 4503 The Lost Weekend—Milland-Wyman ....Nov. 16  
 4502 Follow That Woman—Gargan-Kelly .....Dec. 14

## Block 2

- 4506 Hold That Blonde—Bracken-Lake .....Nov. 23  
 4507 Stork Club—Hutton-Fitzgerald .....Dec. 28  
 4508 People are Funny—Haley-Langford .....Jan. 11  
 4509 Kitty—Milland-Goddard .....Jan. 25

**PRC Pictures, Inc. Features**

(625 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

- 530 The Silver Fleet—English cast (reset) .....July 1  
 562 Three in the Saddle—Texas Rangers  
 (60 min.) .....July 26  
 566 Stagecoach Outlaws—Buster Crabbe (58m.)..Aug. 17  
 519 Dangerous Intruder—Arnt-Borg (re.) .....Aug. 21  
 526 Apology for Murder—Savage-Beaumont (re.)Aug. 27  
 563 Frontier Fugitives—Texas Rangers (55m.)...Sept. 1  
 528 Arson Squad—Albertson-Armstrong .....Sept. 11  
 567 Border Badman—Buster Crabbe .....Oct. 10  
 564 Flaming Bullets—Texas Rangers (61 min.) ..Oct. 15  
 568 Fighting Bill Carson—Buster Crabbe (55m.)..Oct. 31  
 Shadow of Terror—Fraser-Gillhorn (re.) ....Nov. 5  
 111 White Pongo—Fraser-Wrixon .....Not set  
 222 Why Girls Leave Home—Blake-Leonard ....Not set  
 (More to come)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- Prairie Rustlers—Buster Crabbe .....Nov. 7  
 Song of Old Wyoming—Dean-Holt .....Nov. 12  
 The Navajo Kid—Bob Steele .....Nov. 21  
 Enchanted Forest—Lowe-Joyce .....Dec. 8

**Republic Features**

(1790 Broadway, New York vt, N. Y.)

- 420 A Sporting Chance—Randolph-O'Malley....June 4  
 442 Bells of Rosarita—Roy Rogers (68 m.).....June 19  
 417 The Chicago Kid—Barry-Roberts .....June 29  
 422 Gangs of the Waterfront—Armstrong-  
 Bachelor .....July 3  
 423 Road to Alcatraz—Lowery-Storey .....July 10  
 466 Trail of Kit Carson—Lane-London (56 min.)..July 11  
 456 Oregon Trail—Carson-Stewart (56 min.)....July 14  
 421 The Cheaters—Shildkraut-Palette .....July 15  
 419 Hitchhike to Happiness—Pearce-Evans .....July 16  
 424 Jealousy—Loder-Randolph .....July 23  
 418 Steppin' in Society—Horton-George.....July 29  
 443 Man from Oklahoma—Roy Rogers (68 min.)..Aug. 1  
 425 Tell It to a Star—Livingston-Terry .....Aug. 16  
 426 Swingin' on a Rainbow—Frazee-Taylor ....Sept. 1  
 429 Behind City Lights—Roberts-Cookson ....Sept. 10  
 427 The Fatal Witness—Ankers-Fraser .....Sept. 15  
 428 Love, Honor and Goodbye—Bruce-McLaglen Sept. 15  
 444 Sunset in Eldorado—Roy Rogers (65 min.)..Sept. 29  
 445 Don't Fence Me In—Roy Rogers .....Oct. 15  
 430 The Tiger Woman—Richmond-Grey .....Nov. 16  
 (More to Come)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 561 Phantom of the Plains—Bill Elliott (55m.) ..Sept. 7  
 551 Bandits of the Badlands—  
 Sunset Carson (56 min.) .....Sept. 14  
 501 Scotland Yard Investigator—Smith-  
 Von Stroheim .....Sept. 30  
 562 Marshal of Laredo—Bill Elliott (56 min.) ...Oct. 7

**RKO Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

## Block 5

- 521 Two O'Clock Courage—Conway-Rutherford.....  
 522 The Brighton Strangler—Loder-Duprez .....

- 523 Back to Bataan—Wayne-Quinn .....  
 524 West of the Pecos—Mitchum-Hale .....  
 Specials

- 551 The Princess and the Pirate—Bob Hope.....  
 581 Casanova Brown—Cooper-Wright .....  
 582 Woman in the Window—Bennett-Robinson.....  
 583 Belle of the Yukon—Scott-Lee.....  
 584 It's a Pleasure—Henie-O'Shea.....  
 591 The Three Caballeros—Disney.....  
 552 Wonder Man—Kaye-Mayo .....  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

## Block 1

- 601 Mama Loves Papa—Leon Errol .....  
 602 George White's Scandals—Haley-Davis .....  
 603 The Falcon in San Francisco—Tom Conway .....  
 604 Johnny Angel—Raft-Trevor-Hasso .....  
 605 Radio Stars on Parade—Carney-Brown .....

## Block 2

- 606 Man Alive—O'Brien-Drew-Menjou .....  
 607 First Yank Into Tokyo—Neal-Hale .....  
 608 Isle of the Dead—Karloff-Drew .....  
 609 Wanderer of the Wasteland—Warren-Long .....  
 610 The Spanish Main—Henreid-O'Hara .....

## Specials

- 681 Along Came Jones—Cooper-Young .....  
 651 Wonder Man—Danny Kaye .....  
 691 Wonderful Adventures of Pinocchio—(reissue) .....

**Twentieth Century-Fox Features**

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

- 526 Where Do We Go from Here—  
 MacMurray-Leslie .....June  
 527 Don Juan Quilligan—Bendix-Blondell.....June  
 523 Call of the Wild—Gable-Young (reissue).....June  
 528 Within these Walls—Mitchell-Anderson .....July  
 529 Nob Hill—Raft-Blaine .....July

(End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 601 A Bell for Adano—Hodiak-Tierney.....Aug.  
 603 Junior Miss—Garner-Joslyn .....Aug.  
 606 The Way Ahead—David Niven .....Aug.  
 604 Captain Eddie—MacMurray-Bari .....Sept.  
 605 Caribbean Mystery—Dunn-Ryan .....Sept.  
 607 State Fair—Haymes-Crain .....Oct.  
 608 The House on 92nd St.—Eythe-Hasso .....Oct.  
 609 The Dolly Sisters—Grable-Haver .....Nov.  
 610 Col. Effingham's Raid—Coburn-Bennett ....Not set  
 611 And Then There Were None—  
 Fitzgerald-Huston .....Not set  
 613 The Spider—Conte-Marlowe .....Not set  
 Special  
 602 Wilson—Knox-Fitzgerald .....Aug.

**United Artists Features**

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- Blood on the Sun—Cagney-Sidney .....June 15  
 Bedside Manner—Hussey-Carroll .....June 22  
 The Great John L.—McLure-Darnell .....June 29  
 Story of G.I. Joe—Meredith-Mitchum.....July 13  
 Guest Wife—Colbert-Ameche .....July 27  
 The Southerner—Scott-Field (formerly "Hold  
 Autumn in Your Hand") .....Aug. 10  
 Captain Kidd—Laughton-Scott .....Not Set  
 The Outlaw—Russell-Huston .....Not set  
 Paris-Underground—Bennett-Fields .....Not set  
 Spellbound—Bergman-Peck .....Not set

**Universal Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

- 9014 That's the Spirit—Oakie-Ryan (re.) .....June 1  
 9084 Renegades of the Rio Grande—Rod Cameron  
 (57 min.) .....June 1  
 9041 I'll Tell the World—Tracy-Preisser.....June 8  
 9042 Blonde Ransom—Grey-Cook (re.) .....June 15  
 9043 Penthouse Rhythm—Collier-Grant .....June 22  
 9032 The Frozen Ghost—Chaney-Ankers .....June 29  
 9038 Jungle Captive—Kruger-Ward .....June 29  
 9003 The Naughty Nineties—Abbott & Costello..July 6  
 9015 On Stage Everybody—Oakie-Ryan .....July 13  
 9044 The Beautiful Cheat—Granville-Beery, Jr....July 20  
 9025A The Woman in Green—Rathbone-Bruce ..July 27  
 9045 Easy to Look At—Jean-Grant .....Aug. 10  
 9075 Strange Affair of Uncle Harry—  
 Sanders-Raines-Fitzgerald (reset) .....Aug. 17  
 9001 Lady on a Train—Deanna Durbin (reset) ..Aug. 24



- Reissues  
9096 Imitation of Life—Claudette Colbert ..... June 15  
9097 East Side of Heaven—Bing Crosby ..... June 15  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- 501 Shady Lady—Paige-Simms ..... Sept. 7  
502 Men in Her Diary—Hall-Allbritton ..... Sept. 14  
503 River Gang—Jean-Qualen ..... Sept. 21  
1101 Bad Men of the Border—Grant-Knight ..... Sept. 28  
504 That Night With You—Tone-Foster ..... Sept. 28  
505 Strange Confession—Chaney-Joyce ..... Oct. 5  
506 Senorita from the West—Jones-Granville ..... Oct. 12  
1102 Code of the Lawless—Grant-Knight ..... Oct. 19  
507 Pursuit to Algiers—Rathbone-Bruce ..... Oct. 26  
508 That Night in Paradise—Oberon-Bey ..... Nov. 2  
509 Crimson Canary—Beery, Jr.—Collier ..... Nov. 9  
510 This Love of Ours—Oberon-Rains ..... Nov. 23  
1103 Trail to Vengeance—Grant-Knight ..... Nov. 30  
511 House of Dracula—Chaney-Atwill ..... Dec. 7  
512 Pillow of Death—Chaney-Joyce ..... Dec. 14  
513 The Daltons Ride Again—Curtis-Taylor ..... Dec. 21  
514 Scarlet Street—Robinson-Bennett ..... Dec. 28

### Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

- 416 Escape in the Desert—Dorn-Dantine ..... May 19  
417 Pillow to Post—Lupino-Prince ..... June 9  
418 Conflict—Bogart-Smith ..... June 30  
419 The Corn is Green—Davis-Dall ..... July 21  
420 Christmas in Connecticut—Stanwyck-Morgan ..... Aug. 11  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- 501 Pride of the Marines—Garfield-Parker ..... Sept. 1  
502 Rhapsody in Blue—Alda-Leslie ..... Sept. 22  
Three Strangers—Fitzgerald-Greenstreet ..... Not set  
505 Mildred Pierce—Crawford-Carson-Scott ..... Oct. 20  
San Antonio—Flynn-Smith ..... Oct. 27  
Devotion—Lupino-de Havilland-Henreid ..... Nov. 24  
503 It All Came True—Bogart-Sheridan (reissue)  
(97 min.) ..... Oct. 6  
504 Born for Trouble—Johnson-Emerson (reissue)  
(57 min.) (formerly titled "Murder in the  
Big House") ..... Oct. 6

## SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

### Columbia—One Reel

- 6503 Fiesta Time—Col. Rhapsody (7½ m.) ..... July 12  
6808 Hi Ho Rodeo—Sports (9m.) ..... July 22  
6753 Kukunuts—Fox & Crow (6½ m.) ..... July 26  
6661 Community Sings No. 11 (10 m.) ..... July 26  
6860 Screen Snapshots No. 10 (10 m.) ..... July 27  
6504 Hot Foot Light—Color Rhap. (7m.) ..... Aug. 2  
6809 Chips and Putts—Sports (9m.) ..... Aug. 10  
6662 Community Sings No. 12 (10m.) ..... Aug. 23  
6754 Treasure Jest—Fox & Crow (6½ m.) ..... Aug. 30  
6810 Salmon Fishing—Sports (9m.) ..... Sept. 2  
6505 Carnival Courage—Col. Rhap. (7m.) ..... Sept. 6  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- 7951 Milt Britton & Band—Film Vodvil (11 m.) Aug. 30  
7851 Screen Snapshots No. 1 (9 m.) ..... Sept. 7  
7651 Community Sings No. 1 (9½ m.) ..... Sept. 20  
7801 Champion of the Cue—Sports (7½ m.) ..... Sept. 27  
7751 Phoney Baloney—Fox & Crow (reset) ..... Oct. 4  
7701 Simple Siren—Phantasy (reset) ..... Oct. 5  
7601 Catnipped—Flippy (reset) ..... Oct. 11  
7501 River Ribber—Color Rhap. (reset) ..... Oct. 18  
7652 Community Sings No. 2 (10 m.) ..... Oct. 18  
7802 Puck Chasers—Sports ..... Oct. 25  
7952 Randy Brooks Orchestra—Film Vodvil ..... Oct. 30

### Columbia—Two Reels

- 6411 Wife Decoy—Hugh Herbert (17 m.) ..... June 1  
6423 The Jury Goes Round 'N Round—Vera Vague  
(18 m.) ..... June 15  
6405 Idiots Deluxe—Stooges (17½ m.) ..... July 20  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- 7401 If a Body Meets a Body—Stooges (18 m.) Aug. 30  
7409 Vine, Women & Song—Musical Gaiety  
(22½ m.) (re.) ..... Sept. 6  
7120 Jungle Raiders—Serial (15 ep.) (reset) ..... Sept. 14  
7421 The Mayor's Husband—Hugh Herbert  
(16 m.) ..... Sept. 20  
7431 Where the Fest Begins—S. Howard (17 m.) Oct. 4  
7422 Dance, Duncie, Dance—Eddie Foy, Jr.  
(18½ m.) ..... Oct. 18

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- W-632 Mouse in Manhattan—Cartoon (8 m.) ..... July 7  
W-633 Tee for Two—Cartoon (7m.) ..... July 21  
W-634 Swing Shift Cinderella—Cartoon (7 m.) Aug. 25  
T-613 Modern Guatemala City—Traveltalk (9m.) Aug. 25  
(More to Come)

### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- S-751 Football Thrills of 1944—Pete Smith (8m.) Sept. 8  
T-711 Where Time Stands Still—Traveltalk (9m.) Sept. 22  
W-731 Flirty Birdy—Cartoon (7 m.) ..... Sept. 22  
M-781 Strange Destiny—Miniature (10 m.) ..... Sept. 29  
K-771 The Great American Mug—Pass. Par. (10m.) Oct. 6  
S-752 Guest Pests—Pete Smith (9 m.) ..... Oct. 20  
M-782 Spreadin the Jam—Miniature (10 m.) ..... Oct. 27  
K-772 Stairway to Light—Passing Parade (10 m.) Nov. 10

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-504 Phantoms, Inc.—Special (17 m.) ..... June 9  
(End of 1943-44 Season)  
Beginning of 1945-46 Season  
A-701 A Gun in His Hand—Special (19 m.) ..... Sept. 15  
A-702 Purity Squad—Special (20 m.) ..... Nov. 3

### Paramount—One Reel

- J4-5 Popular Science No. 5 (10 m.) ..... June 1  
E4-5 For Better or Nurse—Popeye (6 m.) ..... June 8  
R4-8 Fan Fare—Spotlight (9 m.) ..... June 8  
D4-6 Snap Happy—Little Lulu (7 m.) ..... June 22  
P4-6 A Self Made Mongrel—Noveltoon (7m.) ..... June 29  
U4-6 Hatful of Dreams—Puppetoon (9 m.) ..... July 6  
L4-5 Unusual Occupations No. 5 (10 m.) ..... July 13  
Y4-5 A Musical Way—Speaking of Animals (8m.) July 20  
R4-9 Canine-Feline Capers—Spotlight (9 m.) ..... July 27  
U4-7 Jasper's Booby Traps—Puppetoon (8 m.) ..... Aug. 3  
J4-6 Popular Science No. 6 (10 m.) ..... Aug. 10  
E4-6 Mess Production—Popeye (6 m.) ..... Aug. 24  
R4-10 Campus Mermaids—Spotlight (8m.) ..... Sept. 7  
L4-6 Unusual Occupations No. 6 (10m.) ..... Sept. 14  
Y4-6 From A to Zoo—Speak. of Animals (9m.) ..... Sept. 21  
U4-8 Jasper's Close Shave—Puppetoon (8m.) ..... Sept. 28  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

### Paramount—Two Reels

- FF4-5 Boogie Woogie—Musical Parade (17 m.) ..... June 15  
FF4-6 You Hit the Spot—Musical Parade (17 m.) ..... Aug. 17  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

### Republic—Two Reels

- 483 Federal Operator 99 (12 episodes) Lamont-  
Talbot ..... July 7  
484 Purple Monster Strikes—Morgan-Stirling  
(15 episodes) ..... Sept. 29  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

### RKO—One Reel

- 54311 Tee Tricks—Sportscope (8m.) ..... June 15  
54312 Mexican Playland—Sportscope (9m.) ..... July 13  
54112 Californy 'Er Bust—Disney (7m.) ..... July 13  
54113 Canine Casanova—Disney (7m.) ..... July 27  
53313 Colorado Rainbows—Sportscope (8 m.) ..... Aug. 10  
54114 Duck Pimples—Disney (7½ m.) ..... Aug. 10  
54115 The Legend of Coyote Rock—Disney (7m.) Aug. 24  
54116 No Sail—Disney (7 m.) ..... Sept. 7  
54117 Hockey Homicide—Disney (8 m.) ..... Sept. 21  
(More to Come)

### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- 64301 Athletic Items—Sportscope (8 m.) ..... Sept. 7

### RKO—Two Reels

- 53108 Battle of Supply—This is America (18 m.) June 1  
53705 It Shouldn't Happen to a Dog—  
Errol (18 min.) ..... June 15  
53109 China Lifeline—This is America (16m.) ..... June 29  
53404 What, No Cigarettes?—E. Kennedy (18m.) July 13  
53110 Policing Germany—This is America (18m.) July 27  
53706 Double Honeymoon—Leon Errol (18 m.) Aug. 3  
53405 It's Your Move—Edgard Kennedy (17 m.) Aug. 10  
53111 Annapolis—This is America (16 m.) ..... Aug. 24  
53406 You Drive Me Crazy—Edgard Kennedy  
(17 m.) ..... Sept. 7  
(More to Come)

### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- 63501 A Western Welcome—Western Musical  
(18 m.) ..... Sept. 7  
63701 Beware of Redheads—Leon Errol (17 m.) Sept. 14

**Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel**

- 5354 Down the Fairway—Sports (8 m.) ..... June 1  
 5518 The Silver Streak—Terrytoon (7 min.).... June 8  
 5902 Do You Remember?—Lew Lahr (8 m.)  
 (formerly "Good Old Days")..... June 22  
 5519 Aesop's Fable—The Mosquito—Terrytoon  
 (7 m.) ..... June 29  
 5201 What it Takes to Make a Star—Adventure  
 (formerly "Modeling for Money") (8 m.)... July 6  
 5520 Mighty Mouse & the Wolf—Terry. (7 m.)... July 20  
 5261 The Empire State—Adventure (8 m.)..... July 27  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 6501 Mighty Mouse in Gypsy Life—Terry. (6m.)... Aug. 3  
 6251 Memories of Columbus—Adventure ..... Aug. 17  
 6502 Aesop's Fable—The Fox & the Duck—Terry  
 (7 m.) ..... Aug. 24  
 6252 Magic of Youth—Adventure (7 m.) ..... Sept. 14  
 6503 Swooning the Swooners—Terrytoon(7m.)... Sept. 14  
 6351 Ski Aces—Sports (7 m.) ..... Sept. 21  
 6504 Aesop's Fable—The Watch Dog—Terry  
 (7 m.) ..... Sept. 28  
 6253 China Carries On—Adventure (8 m.) .... Oct. 12  
 6505 Who's Who in the Jungle—Gandy Goose—  
 Terrytoon ..... Oct. 19  
 6254 Bountiful Alaska—Adventure (8 m.) .... Oct. 26  
 6506 Mighty Mouse Meets Bad Bill Bunion—  
 Terrytoon ..... Nov. 9  
 6352 Time Out for Play—Sports ..... Nov. 16  
 6255 Song of Sunshine—Adventure ..... Dec. 7  
 6256 Louisiana Springtime—Adventure (8 m.) .. Dec. 21

**Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels**

- Vol. 11 No. 11—Teen Age Girls—  
 March of Time (17 m.)..... June 15  
 Vol. 11 No. 12—Where's the Meat?—  
 March of Time (17 min.) ..... July 13  
 Vol. 11 No. 13—The New U. S. Frontier—  
 March of Time (17 min.) ..... Aug. 10  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- Vol. 12 No. 1—Palestine Problem—  
 March of Time ..... Sept. 7

**Universal—One Reel**

- 9356 Wingmen of Tomorrow—Var. Views (9 m.)... June 4  
 9238 Crow Crazy—Cartune (7 m.) ..... July 9  
 9357 Victory Bound—Var. Views (9m.) ..... Aug. 6  
 9317 School for Mermaids—Per. Odd. (9m.) ... Aug. 13  
 9358 Village of the Past—Var. Views (9m.) .... Aug. 20  
 9378 Kanine Aristocrats—Per. Odd. (9m.) ..... Aug. 27  
 9240 Dippy Diplomats—Cartune (7m.) ..... Aug. 27  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 1361 Gabriel Heatter Reporting—Per. Odd. (9m.) Sept. 10  
 1341 Queer Birds—Var. Views (9 m.) ..... Sept. 17  
 1362 Hillbilly Artist—Per. Odd. (9 m.) ..... Sept. 24  
 1342 Go North—Var. Views (9 m.) ..... Oct. 1  
 1363 Paper Magic—Per. Odd. (9 m.) ..... Oct. 15  
 1343 Grave Laughter—Var. Views (9 m.) ..... Oct. 22  
 1364 Pottery Poet—Per. Od. (9 m.) ..... Oct. 29  
 1344 Doctor of Paintings—Var. Views (9 m.) ... Nov. 5  
 1365 Front Line Artist—Per. Odd. (9 m.) ..... Nov. 12

**Universal—Two Reels**

- 9881 The Master Key—Stone Wiley (13  
 episodes) ..... Apr. 24  
 9127 Rockabye Rhythm—Musical (15 m.)..... June 20  
 9128 Artistry in Rhythm—Musical (15 m.)..... July 18  
 9129 Waikiki Melody—Musical (15 m.) ..... Aug. 29  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 1581-1593 Secret Agent X-9—Serial (13 ep.) ... July 24  
 1681-1693 The Royal Mounted Rides Again—Serial  
 (13 episodes) ..... Oct. 23  
 1301 Solid Senders—Jan Garber—Musical (15m.) Nov. 21  
 1302 Hot & Hectic—Tommy Tucker—  
 Musical (15 m.) ..... Nov. 28

**Vitaphone—One Reel**

- 1706 Gruesome Twosome—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.) June 9  
 1508 Mexican Sea Sports—Sports (10 m.) (re.)... June 9  
 1609 Bands Across the Sea—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)... June 22  
 1509 Bahama Sea Sports—Sports (10 m.) (re.)... June 23  
 1510 Flivver Flying—Sports (10 m.)..... June 30  
 1707 Tale of Two Mice—Looney Tune (7 m.).... June 30

- 1406 Overseas Roundup No. 3—Varieties (10 m.)... July 14  
 1610 Yankee Doodle Daughters—Mel. Mas.  
 (10 m.) ..... July 21  
 1311 Speakin' of the Weather—Hit. Par. (7 m.)... July 21  
 1708 Wagon Wheels—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) ..... July 28  
 1310 I'm a Little Big Shot Now—Hit. Par. (7 m.)... Aug. 4  
 1724 Hare Conditioned—Bugs Bunny (7 m.) .... Aug. 11  
 1709 Fresh Airedale—Looney Tune (7 m.) ..... Aug. 25  
 1312 Old Glory—Hit. Par. (7 m.) ..... Aug. 25  
 1710 Bashful Buzzard—Looney Tune (7 m.) ..... Sept. 15  
 1711 Peck Up Your Troubles—L. Tune(7m.) (re.) Oct. 20  
 1311 Busy Bakers—Hit. Par. (7 m.) (re.) ..... Oct. 20  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 2402 Miracle Makers—Varieties (10 m.) ..... Sept. 1  
 2401 Alice in Jungleland—Var. (10 m.) ..... Sept. 22  
 2602 Here Comes the Navy Bands—  
 Melody Masters (10 min.) ..... Sept. 29  
 2601 Spade Cooley—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) (re.) .. Sept. 1  
 2603 Musical Novelties—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) .... Oct. 6  
 2403 Story of a Dog—Varieties (10 m.) ..... Oct. 27

**Vitaphone—Two Reels**

- 1104 Coney Island Honeymoon—Special (20 m.)... June 16  
 1112 Learn and Live—Featurette (20 m.) ..... July 7  
 1005 America the Beautiful—Special (20 m.) .... Aug. 4  
 1006 Orders from Tokyo—Special (20 m.) ..... Aug. 18  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 2101 Barber Shop Ballads—Featurette (20 m.) ... Sept. 8  
 2102 Star in the Night—Featurette (20 m.) ..... Oct. 13

## NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES

**Pathe News**

- 65212 Wed. (E) ..Oct. 3  
 65113 Sat. (O) ..Oct. 6  
 65214 Wed. (E) ..Oct. 10  
 65115 Sat. (O) ..Oct. 13  
 65216 Wed. (E) ..Oct. 17  
 65117 Sat. (O) ..Oct. 20  
 65218 Wed. (E) ..Oct. 24  
 65119 Sat. (O) ..Oct. 27  
 65220 Wed. (E) ..Oct. 31  
 65121 Sat. (O) ..Nov. 3  
 65222 Wed. (E) ..Nov. 7  
 65123 Sat. (O) ..Nov. 10  
 65224 Wed. (E) ..Nov. 14  
 65125 Sat. (O) ..Nov. 17

**Universal**

- 438 Thurs. (E) ..Oct. 4  
 439 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 9  
 440 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 11  
 441 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 16  
 442 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 18  
 443 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 23  
 444 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 25  
 445 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 30  
 446 Thurs. (E) ..Nov. 1  
 447 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 6  
 448 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 8  
 449 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 13  
 450 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 15  
 451 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 20

**Paramount News**

- 10 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 4  
 11 Sunday (O) ...Oct. 7  
 12 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 11  
 13 Sunday (O) ...Oct. 14  
 14 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 18  
 15 Sunday (O) ...Oct. 21  
 16 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 25  
 17 Sunday (O) ...Oct. 28  
 18 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 1  
 19 Sunday (O) ...Nov. 4  
 20 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 8  
 21 Sunday (O) ...Nov. 11  
 22 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 15  
 23 Sunday (O) ...Nov. 18

**Metrotone News**

- 208 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 4  
 209 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 9  
 210 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 11  
 211 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 16  
 212 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 18  
 213 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 23  
 214 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 25  
 215 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 30  
 216 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 1  
 217 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 6  
 218 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 8  
 219 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 13  
 220 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 15  
 221 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 20

**Fox Movietone**

- 10 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 4  
 11 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 9  
 12 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 11  
 13 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 16  
 14 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 18  
 15 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 23  
 16 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 25  
 17 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 30  
 18 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 1  
 19 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 6  
 20 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 8  
 21 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 13  
 22 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 15  
 23 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 20

**All American News**

- 154 Friday .....Oct. 5  
 155 Friday .....Oct. 12  
 156 Friday .....Oct. 19  
 157 Friday .....Oct. 26  
 158 Friday .....Nov. 2  
 159 Friday .....Nov. 9  
 160 Friday .....Nov. 16



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New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
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Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1945

No. 41

### A TIMELY VICTORY

The long awaited decision of District Judge John C. Knight, who heard the Government's anti-trust action against the Schine Circuit, was handed down last Monday, coincident with the start of the New York anti-trust trial.

The forty-five page opinion is a sweeping victory for the Government. Judge Knight upheld in their entirety the Government's contentions that the Schine Circuit and its affiliates constituted an unlawful combination, and that they monopolized theatre operations in their respective territories in violation of the anti-trust laws.

The suit, as most of you may remember, was begun by the Government in 1939.

Under the terms of the court's ruling, the Schine Corporation and its affiliated companies are enjoined from monopolizing the supply of major first-run pictures in situations where a competitor has suitable facilities for the exhibition of such pictures, and from monopolizing second-run pictures where similar conditions exist. The circuit is prohibited also from enforcing "any existing agreements not to compete or to restrict the use of any real estate to non-theatrical purposes."

Judge Knight directed that a decree be issued requiring that Schine and its affiliated corporations "be dissolved, realigned, or reorganized in their ownership and control, so that fair competition between them and other theatres be restored and hereafter maintained." The method of dissolution, realignment, or reorganization was left for the court to decide after consultation with representatives of both the Government and the Schine Circuit.

In reviewing the growth of the Schine interests, Judge Knight pointed out that, at the time the suit was filed in 1939, the circuit had an interest in 175 theatres, and that, in 1941, there were only three towns in which Schine's competitors were exhibiting major film products. He added that, "in a single season, 1939-1940, Schine paid \$1,647,000 to six film companies."

A copy of Judge Knight's opinion is not available as this paper goes to press, but here are some excerpts of it, as reported by *Motion Picture Daily*:

"It is the opinion of this court that the defendants have violated Section 1 and Section 2 of the Sherman Act in that they have maintained an unlawful combination among themselves by means of which they have unreasonably restrained trade or commerce among the several states and have monopolized the

business of operating theatres and the supplying of major films in various towns and cities, and that each of the major distributors herein before named, by the methods which it has employed in its dealings with Schine and the independents, has aided and abetted these defendants in unreasonably restraining trade or commerce between the states and the monopolization of theatre operations.

"The great film buying power of the defendant corporations gave opportunity to exert pressure on the distributors to obtain preferences. The extent of this film buying is demonstrated by the exceedingly large number of theatres controlled by Schine and the large amount of money which must have been paid for film rentals. . . .

"This buying power included both closed and open towns. By combining the open and closed towns in Schine's deals with the distributors, Schine was enabled to dictate terms to the distributors. This ability to dictate terms was further increased by the authority of Schine to buy product for theatres not owned or operated by it. Schine acquired by purchase or lease 55 theatres from 1922 to 1931 and 80 from 1936 to 1941, inclusive, 15 in 1938 and 15 in 1939.

"The means and methods employed by the different defendant corporations through their officers and authorized representatives to obtain a monopolist control were numerous. Principally among these were arbitrarily depriving independents of first and second run pictures, securing unreasonable clearance, making threats to build or open closed theatres to prevent construction or operation by independents, lowering admission prices, obtaining rental concessions, restricting independents who sold to Schine as to periods and places of operation, making long-time franchise agreements covering the 'circuit.' . . .

"The Schine circuit buying power beyond pre-adventure was extremely large and its opportunities to utilize this power in the purchase of films to the detriment of its competitors is apparent. These defendants together control the largest independent theatre circuit in the country. For theatre acquisition and capital improvement there has been expended admittedly upwards of \$10,948,100, not including dividend payments on operation expenses and cash on hand."

As already said, the Schine decision is a sweeping victory for the Government, and it is another big step forward in the independent exhibitors' long-standing  
(Continued on last page)

### **"The Spider" with Richard Conte and Faye Marlowe**

(20th Century-Fox, no release date set; time, 61 min.)

This murder mystery melodrama is only mild program fare, for the plot is ordinary, lacks suspense, and the action drags. Even though the murderer's identity is not divulged until the end, it fails to hold the spectator's attention, for the events leading up to his unveiling do not intrigue one. Moreover, the motive for the crimes are not clear to the spectator, for it is communicated to him through excessive, uninteresting dialogue. Stock tricks have been used to create a mysterious atmosphere, and to throw suspicion on the different characters, but they are not very effective. The comedy, little as there is of it, is hardly worth mentioning:—

Seeking to unravel the mysterious disappearance of her sister, Faye Marlowe retains Richard Conte, a private detective, and asks him to pick up an envelope from Ann Savage, his assistant. Conte, mystified, arranges for Ann to meet him at his apartment. There, before he can obtain the envelope, she is murdered by a mysterious intruder. Lest the police suspect him of the crime, Conte removes Ann's body and takes it to her apartment. The police find it under circumstances that lead them to suspect Conte, but they are unable to hold him because of lack of evidence. Conte, determined to solve Ann's murder, starts an investigation of his own. He trails Faye to a local theatre where he finds her working in a mind-reading act with Kurt Kreuger. Faye explains that Ann had communicated with her and had offered to give her proof of her sister's murderer in exchange for a diamond brooch. She explains also that Kreuger had been married to her sister but that they had been divorced several years previously. Convinced that Faye had nothing to do with Ann's murder, Conte visits Ann's apartment and, slipping by a police guard, finds the envelope, which contained newspaper clippings about an unsolved murder that had taken place in a small New Orleans hotel. Following up these clues, Conte discovers evidence leading him to believe that Kreuger was guilty of the crime. He enlists Faye's aid and, together, they succeed in gaining conclusive proof of Kreuger's guilt. Trapped, Kreuger attempts to kill them, but both are saved by the timely arrival of the police.

Jo Eisinger and W. Scott Darling wrote the screen play, Ben Silvey produced it, and Robert Webb directed it. The cast includes Manton Moreland, Walter Sande, Martin Kosleck and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Sensation Hunters" with Doris Merrick and Robert Lowery**

(Monogram, no release date set; time, 63 min.)

An unpleasant, mediocre program melodrama, handicapped by an incoherent story. It is a lurid tale, set in sordid surroundings, revolving around a young girl, who, dissatisfied with her home life, falls in love with a disreputable gambler, and is drawn into a shady existence working in a low-class cabaret. Most of the characters are unsympathetic and weak. It seems as if the producer, in order to keep within the bounds of decency and morality, deleted considerable footage. The editing, however, is so poor that throughout the proceedings one has to guess at what the story is all about. Even the ending is bad; it leaves the spectator completely bewildered. Because of the sordid theme, and of what the story implies, it is definitely

not a picture for either children or adolescents:—

Oppressed by the constant bickering of her family, Doris Merrick, a young factory worker, goes to a cabaret with Eddie Quillan, her sweetheart, and Wanda McKay, her girl-friend. There, Doris strikes up an acquaintance with Robert Lowery, a perfect stranger, whose charm fascinates her. A few nights later, Doris and Quillan, out for an evening of fun, are arrested in a gambling raid and jailed. Doris' father pays her fine and puts her out of his home. Disgraced and without funds, Doris seeks Lowery's assistance. He helps her to get employment as a hostess in an ill-famed night-club, which was operated by Constance Worth, his former sweetheart. Isabel Jewell, one of the hardened hostesses working in the club, warns Doris against Lowery, informing her that he was a gambler and blackmailer. Doris, however, despite Isabel's warning, cannot restrain her love for him. When Lowery gets himself into financial difficulties with Nestor Paiva, a racketeer, he shamelessly induces Doris to give herself to Paiva to square the debt and to save himself from a beating. Although dragged down to Lowery's shady way of life, Doris continues to tolerate him because of her uncontrollable love. Matters reach a climax, however, when Lowery, having started a new love affair with Wanda, Doris' close friend, with whom he intended to leave town, asks Doris for money to finance the trip. Enraged, Doris kills him.

Dennis Cooper wrote the screen play, Joseph Kaufman produced it, and Christy Cabanne directed it. The cast includes Byron Foulger, Vince Barnett and others.

### **"The Crime Doctor's Warning" with Warner Baxter**

(Columbia, October 11; time, 70 min.)

Continuing the adventures of Warner Baxter, as "Dr. Ordway," a psychiatrist-detective, this program murder-mystery melodrama is below par for the series, but it should give satisfaction to those who enjoy pictures of this type without being too concerned about story details. This time the action revolves around Baxter's efforts to aid a young artist, who, suffering from spells of amnesia, feared that he may have committed crimes during his lapses of memory. It is a far-fetched plot, and its development defies plausibility; nevertheless, it manages to sustain a fair degree of suspense since the finger of suspicion is pointed at the young man until the finish, where Baxter proves his innocence:—

While investigating the mysterious slaying of an artists' model, Baxter is visited by Coulter Irwin, a young artist, who relates that he had frequent lapses of memory, and that he was afraid of unwittingly harming others during those spells. Later, Dusty Anderson, Irwin's model, is found murdered in his studio. Suspicion immediately falls on Irwin because of his inability to explain his movements on the day of the crime. Baxter, however, believes the young man innocent and starts an investigation of his own. He learns that both murdered models had been close friends, and that they, together with a third model, had posed recently for a painting. Baxter institutes a search for the third model to learn if she could throw light on the killings. His search leads him to the studio of Miles Mander, an art dealer, who denies knowledge of either the models or the painting. Meanwhile Franco Corsaro, an eccentric artist, who was acquainted with Irwin, is shot to death by an un-



identified man as he attempts to blackmail Irwin's mother; he had informed her that he could prove her son's innocence by revealing the murderer's name. Tracing Corsaro's activities, Baxter learns that he had camouflaged the missing painting with water colors. His investigation leads him back to Mander's studio, where he breaks in and finds, not only the camouflaged painting, but also a realistic statue of the missing model. He soon finds himself confronted by Mander, gun in hand, who explains that he had been married to the missing model, but that he had killed her accidentally. He reveals that he had murdered her girl friends and Corsaro lest they learn of his secret and expose him to the police. Mander prepares to make Baxter his next victim, but the psychiatrist is saved by the timely arrival of the police.

Eric Taylor wrote the screen play, Rudolph C. Flotow produced it, and William Castle directed it. The cast includes John Abbott, Edward Ciannelli and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Kitty" with Paulette Goddard and Ray Milland**

(Paramount, January 25; time, 103 min.)

A fascinating period drama, one that will probably do big business, particularly in metropolitan centers, but it is certainly not entertainment for the family trade; for its story about a guttersnipe's rise from the London slums to a high position in court society, aided by the machinations of a disreputable young nobleman, is one of the most sordid ever presented on the screen. It is a curious mixture of trickery, thievery, murder, self-sacrifice, romance, and sex, in which none of the characters do anything commendable, yet it holds one's attention well, for it has been presented in a skillful manner and is aided considerably by good performances. It will probably appeal chiefly to sophisticated audiences. The period depicted is London in 1870, and the sets are extremely lavish:—

Kitty (Paulette Goddard), an unkempt street waif, is employed by Sir Thomas Gainsborough (Cecil Kellaway) to pose for a painting. Her portrait, titled "An Anonymous Lady," is purchased by the elderly Duke of Malmunster, who expresses a desire to meet its subject. His remark is overheard by Sir Hugh Marcy (Ray Milland), an impoverished, unscrupulous nobleman, who had met Kitty in Gainsborough's studio. He promises the Duke that he will arrange a meeting, but conceals the fact that Kitty was a guttersnipe. Marcy takes Kitty into his home and, together with his gin-loving aunt (Constance Collier), teaches her how to act like a "lady" in a scheme to marry her off to the Duke, and thus recoup his fortune. In the course of her tutelage, Kitty falls in love with Marcy despite his shabby treatment. When Marcy is suddenly thrown into debtors prison, Kitty inveigles a wealthy ironmonger into marrying her, and she steals his money to pay for Marcy's release. The ironmonger attempts to beat Kitty for stealing, but a housemaid she had befriended kills him and then commits suicide herself. Shortly after the funeral, Marcy maneuvers the now wealthy Kitty into a marriage with the elderly Duke. She bears a child that had been fathered by the ironmonger, but allows the Duke to believe that the child was his own. The excitement of the birth causes the Duke to die from a heart attack, making Kitty one of England's richest noblewomen. Having been deeply in love with Marcy all along, Kitty finally becomes angered at his indifference to her and,

to spite him, she becomes engaged to Brett Harwood (Patric Knowles) his best friend. Marcy, his love for her awakened, tries to break up the engagement by revealing Kitty's past, but Harwood is unimpressed. Kitty, however, assured that Marcy's love for her was genuine, jilts Harwood and proclaims her love for Marcy.

Darrel Ware and Karl Tunberg wrote the screen play from a novel by Rosamond Marshall. Mr. Tunberg produced it, and Mitchell Leisen directed it. The cast includes Eric Blore and others.

Strictly adult fare.

### **"People are Funny" with Jack Haley and Helen Walker**

(Paramount, January 11; time, 92 min.)

Based on the radio show of the same title, this comedy with music shapes up as a passable but over-long program entertainment. The fact that the title is familiar to millions of radio listeners, who may be curious to see how the show's broadcasts are conducted, should be of help at the box-office. The story material, however, is pretty weak, the action is slow in spots, and the comedy is not of the uproarious type. Moreover, the actions of the main characters, with the exception of Jack Haley, are not edifying. The most entertaining moments in the picture are provided by the Vagabonds, a comedy musical quartette. Frances Langford appears briefly, singing one song:—

Philip Reed, a radio executive, finds himself in a predicament when Rudy Valle, sponsor of his new radio show, orders him to take it off the air and to substitute a new show within a week. Reed telephones Helen Walker, his fiancée and ace writer, who was vacationing at a dude ranch, and asks her to return to Hollywood to write a new show. Meanwhile Ozzie Nelson, Reed's rival for Helen's hand, and a radio show producer himself, learns of Vallee's dissatisfaction with Reed's program; he urges Helen to write a new show for him so that they could sell it to Vallee themselves. Helen, peeved at Reed's inattentiveness to her, fondles the idea and agrees to ride back to Hollywood with Nelson. En route, their car becomes stalled in a small Nevada town, where they attend a local radio show produced and conducted by Jack Haley, a naive, good-hearted fellow. Titled "People Are Funny," it was an audience-participation stunt show. Both Helen and Nelson realize that the show would be a hit on a national broadcast, and they agree to join forces to buy the show from Haley. Helen, however, planned to double-cross Nelson and to give the show to Reed. Haley, believing that the show belonged to the townspeople, refuses to sell, but Helen soon influences him with her charm and induces him to come to Hollywood. Haley is given a big send-off by the townspeople. When he arrives in Hollywood, he soon finds himself the pawn in a series of wild mix-ups, in which Helen, Reed, and Nelson continually double-cross each other in an effort to sell the show to Vallee. He heads for home disillusioned, and, upon his arrival, is bewildered when his neighbors acclaim him as a success. They explain that, while he was traveling, Helen, Reed, Nelson, and Vallee had agreed on a deal, and that they had broadcast his show over a national hook-up.

Maxwell Shane and David Land wrote the screen play, and Sam White produced and directed it. The cast includes Art Linkletter and others. It is a Pine-Thomas production.

Unobjectionable morally.

fight for free and open competition. As was true in the Crescent decision, which was affirmed by the U. S. Supreme Court, the Schine decision, in the opinion of this paper, makes it a dangerous practice for either an affiliated circuit or a powerful independent circuit to use its buying power to deprive independents of choice product, or to use its influence to prevent an exhibitor who owns a single theatre from competing with it for film on an equal basis.

This latest Government victory is hailed by some exhibitor leaders as being even more sweeping than the victory won in the Crescent case. They believe that it will have a most important bearing on the pending anti-trust suit in New York, as well as on the ultimate decision in the suit against the Griffith Circuit, the trial of which was concluded last week.

This paper will endeavor to obtain a copy of Judge Knight's opinions for the purpose of discussing, in subsequent issues, such portions of it as may prove to be of interest to its subscribers.

### AN IMPORTANT TRIAL GETS UNDER WAY

The New York anti-trust trial started as scheduled last Monday, October 9.

The first two days were taken up with the opening statements by both sides and, as expected, Robert L. Wright, special assistant to the Attorney-General, stated that the Government would rest its case on documentary evidence, which will show that the inter-relationship of the distributor-defendants, in the conduct of their activities in the distribution and exhibition of films, has resulted in a concerted monopolization of the domestic motion picture industry. Wright stated that the Government would call no witnesses, except where needed for rebuttal of either testimony or evidence that might be offered by the defendants.

As was expected also, the imposing battery of defense attorneys, in their opening statements, argued vigorously against the Government's allegations of monopoly and often belittled them. One of the attorneys, Joseph M. Proskauer, of Warner Brothers, asserted several times that charts introduced by the Government, purporting to show that the defendants control first-run theatres and admission prices in a majority of seventy-three cities with a population of more than 100,000, were "scrap paper."

Edward C. Rafferty, representing Universal and United Artists, argued eloquently that he could see no reason why his clients, as well as Columbia, none of which owns theatres, were included in the suit. Wright, upon being asked by the Court for his opinion on whether or not the "Little Three" should remain in the case, replied that they were not as "lily white" as Mr. Rafferty had painted them, and that, judged by their agreements with affiliated circuits, they were "not entitled to a clean bill of health." Wright, referring to the Goldman case in Philadelphia, stated that the "Little Three" had withheld first-run product from Goldman, under an agreement to sell first-run in Philadelphia to the Warner Theatres only. Upon hearing from Wright, the Court took no action on Rafferty's move for dismissal.

Significant of the Court's intention to speed up the case and to brook no legalistic delays, was its attitude towards the defendants' request that they be granted a recess of three weeks following the Government's presentation of its case. The defense attorneys argued that it was not until they had received the Government's trial brief on September 20 that they understood fully the nature of the allegations, and that they would, therefore, need the recess period to prepare their defense properly. Judge Augustus N. Hand, who is presiding over the three-judge statutory court, looked upon the request with disfavor, pointing out that the defendants knew pretty well in advance of just what the Government's case would be like, and that they had years, as well as all summer, to prepare their defense. He added that neither he nor his colleagues cared to "spend the rest of their lives" hearing the case. The motion was finally taken under advisement.

Some observers at the trial commented upon the fact that Wright, the Government's chief trial counsel, was not much of an orator. That may be true, but it should be remembered that facts and not oratory will determine the issues at stake. And if one is to judge by Wright's record thus far in his handling of the Crescent and Schine anti-trust suits, as well as the Government's intervention in the Goldman case, one need not be concerned about his lack of oratory.

### A WARNING TO BE HEEDED

A warning that 16 mm. competition is beginning to reach serious proportions is to be gleaned from two independent exhibitor association bulletins that have reached this office in recent days.

Pete Wood, secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, informs his members that he has it "on very good authority that a responsible group of outsiders is contemplating a state-wide venture into the 16 mm. field. The project involves the construction and operation of auditoriums seating not more than five hundred people in towns of less than seven thousand."

Sidney E. Samuelson, general manager of the Allied Independent Theatre Owners of Eastern Pennsylvania, cautions his members that the 16 mm. situation is becoming very serious and gives them the following advice:

"Exhibitors in small towns and in the thinly populated city neighborhoods should survey their situations immediately with a view to buying 16 mm. portable equipment and running shows themselves in places located near their own theatres that do not have established theatres. This is the best method to protect your business from jack-rabbit competition."

Both Wood and Samuelson are old hands in this business and they are not given to idle warnings. Do something about the 16 mm. condition now. Don't lock the barn door after the horse escapes.

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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1945

No. 42

### THE GOVERNMENT RESTS ITS CASE

Moving along at an unusually fast pace, the New York anti-trust trial, after four days of hearings, was recessed on Thursday, October 11, until Monday, October 22, to allow the distributor-defendants time to prepare and present their case. Originally, the defendants had requested a three-week delay, but the Court, which had made it clear earlier that it desired to expedite the proceedings, granted them ten days only.

By the end of the fourth day of the trial, the Department of Justice rested the Government's case, after completing submission of its documentary evidence purporting to show that the defendants monopolize exhibition and distribution in the domestic market. The submission of this evidence was marked by sharp verbal objections on the part of the defendants' attorneys.

When the Government offered in evidence the Arbitration Board cases and the Appeal Board decisions under the arbitration system that had been set up under the Consent Decree, the objections on the part of the defendants reached their greatest heights. And for a good reason. The Government was offering these cases and decisions as evidence of anti-trust violations. The defendants claimed that the arbitration proceedings had no rightful place in the present trial.

Here was indeed a vital question, one that required careful consideration. The Court, after hearing the arguments presented by both sides, took the question under advisement until the following day, when it rendered its decision, overruling the objections of the defendants, and ruling that the arbitration proceedings were admissible as evidence. The Court made it plain, however, that the arbitration proceedings might be received in evidence only insofar as they affected the "Big Five." The "Little Three," Columbia, Universal, and United Artists, were excluded from the issue because, not having been parties to the Consent Decree, they had not been subject to arbitration proceedings.

It was the opinion of numerous observers at the trial that Robert L. Wright, the Government's trial attorney, in convincing the Court that the arbitration proceedings should be admitted into the record, had won a most important point for the Government. To the defendants, the admission of this evidence is regarded as a serious blow.

When the trial resumes on Monday, October 22, it is expected as a matter of course that the defendants will move for a dismissal of the case. It is unlikely, however, that such a motion will be granted.

### A NEW FORM OF ADVERTISING

Weekly Variety reports in its October 17 issue that an organization calling itself Telecast, Inc., is now carrying on experiments in a number of New York City theatres to determine the feasibility of broadcasting to theatre audiences,

for a three-minute period, the latest news items, with two 15-second commercials of some nationally advertised product thrown in for good measure.

According to the report, audiences look at a blank screen before and after the main feature while an announcer broadcasts the news, starting and ending each broadcast with the 15-second commercial, in much the same manner as a sponsored radio news program. The report states also that audience reaction during the experiments has been passive.

HARRISON'S REPORTS is in no position to say whether or not this new idea will prove worthwhile to its originators, but it does feel that any exhibitor who would permit such a service to operate in his theatre may do himself incalculable harm. Theatre patrons resent advertising that is thrust upon them, even though they may not say anything in protest. They pay an admission for the privilege of seeing and hearing entertainment. And advertising is not entertainment.

Whatever revenue a theatre may receive for permitting commercial broadcasting to its audiences may be more than offset by the loss of patronage.

The exhibitor's business is to provide entertainment. Let us leave advertising to the newspapers and radio.

### SAMUEL GOLDWYN SETS A NEW PATTERN

In a complete reorganization of his company's business interests, Samuel Goldwyn announced this week that he had formed a new corporation, Samuel Goldwyn Productions, Inc., and that fifty per cent of its stock would be made available to those employees who will be concerned most vitally in the making and distribution of the company's pictures. For the present, there will be excluded from the right to acquire the company's stock actors and actresses, who, according to Goldwyn, earn enough.

Under the new set-up, Goldwyn becomes chairman of the board of directors, and James Mulvey, who has been head of Goldwyn's distribution for many years, becomes president.

It is a sort of management-employee participation plan, in which Goldwyn himself, as a reward to faithful employees for their loyalty to him throughout the years, will determine which of them may acquire stock and the number of shares each may have, based on years of service and on value to the organization.

In allowing his employees to participate in the management of the company and to share in the profits, Goldwyn is to be congratulated for a liberal move. HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes Goldwyn and his employee-associates the greatest success, and it hopes that the feeling of liberality that motivated the reorganization of the Goldwyn company will be reflected in its dealings with exhibitors, which can best be evidenced by a change from notoriously high film rentals to reasonable live-and-let-live rentals.

**"She Went to the Races" with  
Frances Gifford and James Craig**  
(MGM, no release date set; time, 86 min.)

A pleasantly amusing racetrack comedy, of program grade; it should give good satisfaction to the majority of picture-goers. The story, which centers around the adventures of a pretty feminine scientist and her four elderly associates who, to raise funds for an experimental laboratory, devise a scientific system with which to beat the horse races, is filled with so many mirth-provoking situations that one is kept laughing all the way through. The romantic involvements, too, are humorous. Every one in the cast performs well. The manner in which the elderly scientists apply their scientific knowledge to "dope" out the races is highly amusing:—

To raise \$20,000 for an experimental laboratory in the Brockhurst Research Institute, and to assure the continued services of their colleague, Dr. Edmund Gwenn, who faced dismissal, Dr. Frances Gifford, together with her elderly associate professors (Sig Ruman, Charles Halton, and Reginald Owen), figure out a scientific way to beat the horse races. Unable to obtain accommodations at a hotel near the track, Frances induces James Craig, a horse owner, to share his hotel suite with her and her colleagues. A romance springs up between Frances and Craig, and her colleagues, after making their deductions, advise her to bet on his horse. Craig advises her that his horse could not win, and induces her to change her bet. His horse does win, however, and Frances, believing that he had tricked her, refuses to see him. Later, when she learns that he had been sincere, she goes to him only to find that Ava Gardner, a wealthy horse owner, had become her rival for his affections. On the day of the big race, Frances, hoping to recoup her colleague's losses, borrows \$2,000 from Craig and asks him to place it on his horse. Craig, believing that Ava's horse would win the race, bets the money accordingly but does not inform Frances. Meanwhile Frances and Ava, without Craig's knowledge, make a side wager in which each agrees to relinquish her right to Craig if the other's horse wins. Craig's horse wins again, resulting in Frances' winning Craig for herself but losing her chance to recoup the professors' losses. It all turns out for the best, however, when word comes that the Institute's board of trustees had provided funds for the laboratory.

Lawrence Hazard wrote the screen play, Frederick Stephani produced it, and Willis Goldbeck directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Senorita from the West" with Allan Jones  
and Bonita Granville**  
(Universal, October 12; time, 63 min.)

Poor program fare; it drags from beginning to end. The story is so trite and its treatment so makeshift that it is doubtful if the average picture-goer will have the patience to sit throughout the entire picture. In spite of the fact that it mixes comedy, romance, and a few songs, it fails to impress on any one count. The dialogue in particular is wearisome. The players try hard, but there is nothing that they can do with the poor material. Not much can be said for the direction:—

Bonita Granville, an eighteen-year-old orphan, who aspired to a singing career, keeps house for her

three guardians (George Cleveland, Fuzzy Knight, and Oscar O'Shea), operators of a desert gold mine. Unknown to Bonita, her guardians had struck it rich, but they keep the good news from her lest she be hounded by fortune-hunters. Bonita, on the other hand, to help them, runs away to New York to seek a theatrical career. She obtains employment as an elevator operator in Radio City, where she meets and falls in love with Allan Jones, who represents himself as secretary to Jess Barker, a popular radio crooner. Actually, Jones did the singing for Barker through a hidden microphone, because he was too bashful to face squealing "bobby-sox" admirers. Meanwhile Bonita's guardians follow her to New York and, still keeping their wealth a secret, arrange with Barker to sponsor her. Barker, aware that Bonita was an heiress, convinces her guardians that Jones was a fortune-hunter. He then conspires with them to discredit Jones, and starts a campaign of his own to win Bonita's love. Bonita, dazzled by Barker's importance, accepts his attentions and runs off with him to Connecticut to get married. Jones, to save her, reveals that Barker was an imposter, and sings over the air himself to prove his statement. Aided by her three guardians, Jones follows Bonita to Connecticut, arriving in time to halt the elopement and to win Bonita for himself.

Howard Dimsdale wrote the screenplay, Philip Cahn produced it, and Frank Strayer directed it. The cast includes Renny McEvoy, Emmett Vogan and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Scotland Yard Investigator" with  
Eric Von Stroheim and Sir Aubrey Smith**  
(Republic, September 30; time, 68 min.)

Fair program entertainment. In spite of the fact that the story, which revolves around the theft of Leonardo Da Vinci's "Mona Lisa," is far-fetched and is lacking in freshness, it should get by as a supporting feature with those who enjoy crook melodramas with touches of murder and mystery. The action, however, is slow-moving, and it is lacking in suspense. In its favor are competent performances, good direction, and better than average production values. The romantic interest is pleasant, but it is of no importance:—

Eric Von Stroheim, a fanatical art collector, whose hobby it was to collect stolen original paintings, plots to steal the "Mona Lisa" from Sir Aubrey Smith, director of the National Art Gallery in London, with whom the French Government had stored the painting until after the war. Two of Von Stroheim's henchmen, posing as French representatives, visit Smith and succeed in obtaining the painting, but when they deliver it to Von Stroheim he discovers it to be a clever copy of the original. He boldly returns the copy to Smith and informs him that it was a fake. Smith, to avoid an international scandal, does not notify the police; he determines to recover the original at any price. Von Stroheim succeeds in tracing the painting to Forrester Harvey, an unscrupulous antique dealer, who demands 100,000 pounds for the masterpiece. Refusing to pay such a fantastic sum, Von Stroheim subsequently murders Harvey and steal the painting for himself. Meanwhile Stephanie Bachelor, Smith's granddaughter, enlists the aid of Inspector Richard



Fraser of Scotland Yard to protect Smith from harm during his search. Smith eventually becomes convinced that Von Stroheim had the painting in his possession, and he determines to steal it back. He is caught by Von Stroheim who prepares to kill him only to be shot dead himself by Doris Lloyd, widow of the murdered antique dealer, who sought to avenge her husband's death. With Fraser's aid, Smith recovers the original painting and returns it to the French authorities.

Randall Faye wrote the screen play, and George Blair produced and directed it. The cast includes Victor Varconi, Frederic Worlock and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Club Havana" with Tom Neal  
and Margaret Lindsay**

(PRC, November 23; time, 62 min.)

Fair program entertainment. Done in the "Grand Hotel" manner, with all the action taking place at a fashionable Miami night-club, the story concerns itself with a number of thinly interwoven incidents that happen during the course of one evening, affecting the lives of about six couples, guests at the club. It is a combination of music, comedy, murder, and tragedy, in which the paths of some of the guests cross each other, bringing happiness to some of them and heartaches to others. While the different happenings succeed in holding one's attention fairly well, it is the musical end of the picture that is most entertaining. This consists chiefly of pleasant Latin-American music, played by Carlos Molina's orchestra and sung by Isabelita. Although the action is slow-moving, it is at times tense.

The story, which shifts from one couple to another and back again, revolves around Tom Neal, a young interne, and Dorothy Morris, a nervous young miss, both on their first date; Don Douglas, a socialite, and Margaret Lindsay, an attractive divorcee, who had just returned from Reno to marry him only to learn that his love had cooled; Paul Cavanagh, a dapper promoter, who tries to sell a get-rich-quick scheme to a wealthy dowager only to be inveigled by her into marriage; and Eric Sinclair, a piano player, who nervously confides to Isabelita, his sweetheart, that he was an unseen witness at a murder committed by Marc Lawrence, a notorious gangster present in the club, whom the police suspected of the crime. In the course of events, Isabelita induces Sinclair to telephone the police and inform them of his knowledge without revealing his identity. The conversation is overheard by Sonia Sorel, the club's switchboard operator, who informs Lawrence. The gangster in turn arranges with a henchman to murder Sinclair lest the police learn his identity as a witness. Meanwhile Margaret, despondent over Douglas' attitude, swallows an overdose of sleeping pills and becomes deathly ill. Neal, called upon to treat her, saves her life. The incident awakens Douglas' love for Margaret, and he promises to marry her. All leave as the club closes down for the night. Sonia, getting into her car, sees Lawrence's gunman lurking in the shadows waiting to murder Sinclair. Realizing that Sinclair's murder would be on her conscience, Sonia starts her car and speeds it directly towards the gunman, but he manages to shoot her dead before the car snuffs out his life. The police arrive and take Sinclair into protective custody so

that he could testify against Lawrence, who had been apprehended.

Raymond L. Schrock wrote the screen play, Leon Fromkess produced it, and Edgar G. Ulmer directed it. Martin Mooney was associate producer. The cast includes Ernest Truex, Gertrude Michael and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Yolanda and the Thief" with Fred Astaire,  
Lucille Bremer and Frank Morgan**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 108 min.)

This musical has been given an extremely lavish production, photographed in Technicolor, but it is only mildly entertaining. Much of it, in fact, bores one. As far as the music and dancing are concerned, most of it is good, but the story, which revolves around a personable confidence man, who, to mulct a naive, convent-reared heiress out of her fortune, convinces her that he is her "guardian angel," fails to hold one's interest. The basic story idea is not bad, but it has not been presented skilfully. The chief fault lies in the fact that the heroine's naivete is totally unbelievable. Even the comedy, at best, is only moderately amusing. One particular dance sequence, a sort of symbolic one, in which Fred Astaire is supposed to be having a nightmare, is tiresome, not only because it is over-long, but also because the bulk of picture-goers will probably fail to understand it. The background is that of a mythical Latin-American country:—

According to South America to escape charges in the United States, Fred Astaire, a debonair crook, and Frank Morgan, his companion, learn that Lucille Bremer, a passenger on their train, who had spent her life in a convent, was the wealthiest person in the land of "Patria," and that she was on her way home to assume management of her vast fortune. Astaire immediately starts thinking of a scheme to relieve her of her wealth. Arriving home, Lucille, confused by the prospect of managing her business affairs, goes into the garden and prays aloud to her guardian angel for help, unaware that Astaire was sitting on the garden wall listening. Later, he telephones her and, posing as her "guardian angel," tells her that he had heard her plea and that he was coming to earth in human form to help her, but he warns her to keep his "angelic" identity secret. Meeting Lucille at her mansion, Astaire has little difficulty in getting her to turn over to him a fortune in bonds. He begins to feel some remorse for his actions, however, when he finds himself falling in love with her. Meanwhile Astaire was bothered by the unexpected appearances of Leon Ames, a total stranger, whom he suspected of being a rival contender for Lucille's fortune, because he managed continually to interfere with his plans. Lucille eventually falls in love with Astaire, causing him to feel miserably repentant; he returns her bonds with a letter of confession, and leaves town. Once again, however, he finds himself confronted by Ames, who this time reveals himself to be Lucille's "real" guardian angel in human form. He arranges for Astaire to return to her and, after their marriage, disappears.

Irving Brecher wrote the screen play, Arthur Freed produced it, and Vincent Minnelli directed it. The cast includes Mildred Natwick, Mary Nash and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES**

(The previous box-office performances were printed in the May 12, 1945 issue.)

**Columbia**

"Escape in the Fog": Poor  
 "Eve Knew Her Apples": Fair  
 "Power of the Whistler": Fair  
 "Counter-Attack": Fair  
 "Boston Blackie Booked on Suspicion": Fair-Poor  
 "The Fighting Guardsman": Fair-Poor  
 "Ten Cents a Dance": Fair  
 "Blonde from Brooklyn": Fair-Poor  
 "Boston Blackie's Rendezvous": Fair-Poor  
 "A Thousand and One Nights": Very Good-Good  
 "You Can't Do Without Love": Poor  
 "The Gay Senorita": Fair  
 "Over 21": Good  
 "Adventures of Rusty": Poor  
 "I Love a Bandleader": Fair

Fifteen pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 1; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 4; Poor, 3.

**Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer**

"Valley of Decision": Very Good  
 "Without Love": Good  
 "Gentle Annie": Fair  
 "The Clock": Good  
 "Picture of Dorian Gray": Good-Fair  
 "Son of Lassie": Good  
 "Thrill of a Romance": Very Good  
 "Twice Blessed": Good-Fair  
 "Bewitched": Fair-Poor  
 "Anchors Aweigh": Excellent-Very Good  
 "Our Vines Have Tender Grapes": Good  
 "The Hidden Eye": Fair

Twelve pictures have been checked with the following results: Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 2; Good, 4; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 1.

**Paramount**

"The Affairs of Susan": Good  
 "Murder, He Says": Fair  
 "Scared Stiff": Fair-Poor  
 "A Medal for Benny": Fair  
 "Out of this World": Good-Fair  
 "Midnight Manhunt": Fair-Poor  
 "You Came Along": Good-Fair  
 "Incendiary Blonde": Very Good-Good  
 "Northwest Mounted Police" (reissue): Good  
 "This Gun for Hire" (reissue): Good

Ten pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 2.

**RKO**

"Wonder Man": Very Good  
 "Zombies on Broadway": Fair  
 "The Body Snatcher": Fair  
 "Tarzan and the Amazons": Good-Fair  
 "China Sky": Good-Fair  
 "Those Endearing Young Charms": Good  
 "Two O'Clock Courage": Fair  
 "The Brighton Strangler": Fair  
 "Back to Bataan": Good-Fair  
 "West of the Pecos": Fair  
 "Mama Loves Papa": Fair  
 "George White's Scandale": Good-Fair  
 "The Falcon in San Francisco": Fair  
 "Johnny Angel": Good-Fair  
 "Along Came Jones": Good

"Pinnocchio" (reissue): Good  
 "Radio Stars on Parade": Fair

Seventeen pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 5; Fair, 8.

**20th Century-Fox**

"Diamond Horseshoe": Very Good-Good  
 "The Bull Fighters": Fair-Poor  
 "Where Do We Go from Here?": Good-Fair  
 "Don Juan Quilligan": Fair-Poor  
 "Call of the Wild" (reissue): Fair  
 "Within These Walls": Fair  
 "Nob Hill": Good  
 "A Bell for Adano": Good  
 "Junior Miss": Good  
 "The Way Ahead": Poor  
 "Captain Eddie": Good-Fair  
 "Caribbean Mystery": Fair-Poor

Twelve pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 3; Poor, 1.

**United Artists**

"It's in the Bag": Fair  
 "Colonel Blimp": Fair  
 "The Great John L.": Good-Fair  
 "Story of G.I. Joe": Good  
 "Guest Wife": Good-Fair  
 "The Southerner": Good-Fair

Six pictures have been checked with the following results: Good, 1; Good-Fair, 3; Fair-Poor, 2.

**Universal**

"The House of Fear": Fair  
 "I'll Remember April": Fair  
 "Song of the Sarong": Fair  
 "Salome—Where She Danced": Good-Fair  
 "Patrick the Great": Good-Fair  
 "Honeymoon Ahead": Fair-Poor  
 "Swing Out Sister": Fair-Poor  
 "See My Lawyer": Fair  
 "That's the Spirit": Fair  
 "I'll Tell the World": Fair  
 "Blonde Ransom": Fair-Poor  
 "Penthouse Rhythm": Fair-Poor  
 "The Frozen Ghost": Fair-Poor  
 "Jungle Captive": Fair-Poor  
 "The Naughty Nineties": Good-Fair  
 "On Stage Everybody": Fair  
 "The Beautiful Cheat": Fair-Poor  
 "The Woman in Green": Fair  
 "Easy to Look At": Fair-Poor  
 "Strange Affair of Uncle Harry": Good-Fair  
 "Lady on a Train": Good-Fair  
 "Imitation of Life" (reissue): Good-Fair  
 "East Side of Heaven" (reissue): Good-Fair  
 "Shady Lady": Good-Fair  
 "Men in Her Diary": Fair  
 "River Gang": Fair

Twenty-six pictures have been checked with the following results: Good-Fair, 8; Fair, 10; Fair-Poor, 8.

**Warner Bros.**

"The Horn Blows at Midnight": Fair  
 "Escape in the Desert": Fair  
 "Pillow to Post": Fair  
 "Conflict": Good-Fair  
 "The Corn is Green": Good-Fair  
 "Christmas in Connecticut": Very Good-Good  
 "Pride of the Marines": Very Good-Good  
 "Rhapsody in Blue": Very Good-Good

Eight pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good-Good, 3; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 3.



Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

# HARRISON'S REPORTS

## Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions.	16.50
Canada .....	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain .....	15.75
Australia, New Zealand,	
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35c a Copy	

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New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1945

No. 43

## What's to Become of the Subsequent-Run?

In last week's issue, this paper congratulated Samuel Goldwyn for his liberality in reorganizing his picture business interests in a manner that would permit his employees to participate in the management and to share in the profits of his newly-formed corporation, Samuel Goldwyn Productions, Inc.

It seems, however, that Goldwyn, while setting a liberal policy of management-employee relationship in the production phase of the industry, has retained his scornful attitude toward the little fellow in the exhibition phase—the subsequent-run exhibitor.

Under the heading "Goldwyn Snubs Subsequents," *Showmen's Trade Review*, in its October 20 issue, reported the following:

"Subsequent-run bookings mean nothing to Samuel Goldwyn, according to a statement by the producer in New York this week to trade press representatives. Goldwyn said that if he can get bookings on his pictures in 50 top first-run theatres with seating capacities of from 1200 to 1400, he would be willing to forego all subsequent run bookings. Goldwyn conceded that subsequent runs are necessary so as many people as possible can see the pictures, but so far as domestic gross on his pictures is concerned he considers the follow-up bookings economically unattractive because, he said, the cost of selling and servicing them makes them unprofitable for the producer. \* \* \* Seventy per cent of the total domestic revenue on his pictures comes from first runs, Goldwyn said."

In the same issue, *Showmen's Trade Review*, reports the reaction of a number of film executives who were queried on the subject raised by Goldwyn. One unnamed distribution executive is reported to have said that "Sam doesn't know what he is talking about." Referring to the New York showing of Goldwyn's "Wonder Man," which is currently in its twenty-first and final week at the Astor Theatre, operated jointly by Goldwyn and David O. Selznick, this executive pointed out that, at the conclusion of the showing, the picture "will have run up a total attendance of say 900,000 to 930,000. \* \* \* According to Goldwyn, he should then have about 70 per cent of his total revenue on 'Wonder Man' for the area. However, let us take a picture that plays 10 weeks at Radio City Music Hall, a much larger theatre than the Astor, and in which pictures (one, at least) have played to over 1,450,000 admissions. In attendance, that represents about one-third of the final total for the picture in the area, while in dollar terms it represents about 50 per cent of the final gross. Goldwyn says that, given fifty top houses throughout the nation with seating capacities of 1200 to 1400, he would willingly abandon subsequent bookings. If he means 50 Radio City Music Halls, he might be correct, but even then his product would have to hold up to 10 and 20 week runs in all of them. (Incidentally, if Sam owned a good proportion of those theatres—as he'd have to in order

to be assured bookings in them for his picture—Goldwyn would be making so much money out of exhibition that he probably wouldn't even look at the production business.)

"Using 'Wonder Man's' 20-week engagement on Broadway as a comparison, the picture should play to 3,000,000 to 5,000,000 people over and above the 900,000 admissions at the Astor when 'Wonder Man' plays its circuit bookings for Metropolitan New York. This will gross Goldwyn at least the same amount of money he receives from the Astor booking. Can he afford to throw away 50 per cent of his revenue? Over the country the figures are even higher."

A review of the aforementioned figures cited by this distribution executive leaves one pretty much convinced that Goldwyn is "talking through his hat." But, since Goldwyn is an old hand in this business, and since he is undoubtedly very much aware of a picture's potential gross, one wonders if he isn't "talking through his hat" deliberately. And if he is, what can be his motive?

Goldwyn's contention that he can get along without subsequent-run bookings is certainly not in keeping with his actions and his statements of a little more than a year ago. At that time, most of you may recall, Goldwyn found himself in a controversy with the T&D Jr. Enterprises, with which he could not agree on rental terms for the exhibition in Reno, Nevada, of "Up In Arms." The T&D Circuit, operators of the five theatres in Reno, refused to agree to what they considered excessive percentage demands, as well as to the requirement that they buy the picture also for all their theatres, which they operate in many small towns and cities throughout Northern California, including San Francisco.

Goldwyn, with his usual flair for gaining nation-wide publicity at a comparatively low cost, converted a Reno dance hall into a theatre for the showing of the picture and, threatening to carry his fight against what he termed "monopolistic practices in exhibition" directly to the public, issued a statement that Reno was "typical of the squeeze by which many theatre units, large and small, deprive independent producers of their rightful share of boxoffice dollars."

In view of the fact that Goldwyn considers subsequent-run bookings unprofitable, it is difficult to understand how he, as an "independent producer," could have believed that, through the refusal of the T&D Jr. Enterprises to book his picture into their theatres, he was deprived of his "rightful share of boxoffice dollars." Moreover, when one considers that Goldwyn reputedly spent \$30,000 to convert the Reno dance hall into a theatre, it does seem that he went to an unusual amount of expense and trouble to exhibit his picture in a town that is certainly not among the top fifty first-run situations in the country. Could it have been that he was merely trying to pressure the T&D Circuit into booking his picture in all their theatres, even though none

(Continued on last page)

**"This Love of Ours" with Merle Oberon,  
Charles Korvin and Claude Rains**  
(Universal, Nov. 2; time, 90 min.)

This is an effective drama, well acted and directed, the sort that will have a particular appeal for women, because the theme is that of mother love and sacrifice. Although the story will not stand up under close scrutiny, it has, nevertheless, been handled deftly, holding one's interest throughout. Merle Oberon, as the mother, who is mistakenly accused by her husband of unfaithfulness, and who in later years finds that her young daughter, taken away from her as a baby, believes her to be dead, arouses much sympathy for herself. It has several highly dramatic situations, the most effective one taking place at the finish, where Miss Oberon, happily reconciled with her remorseful husband but miserable over her inability to win the affection of her daughter, who, unaware of their true relationship, treated her like a strange intruder, decides to leave him for the sake of the girl's happiness; it is then that the daughter becomes understanding and rushes into Miss Oberon's arms with the cry, "Mother!" This scene will bring tears to the eyes of most women:—

Charles Korvin, a struggling young doctor in Paris, falls in love with Merle Oberon, an actress, and marries her. When their daughter reaches the age of two, they arrange a birthday party for her. Korvin, while purchasing a cake for the party, overhears two women gossip about a supposed affair Merle was having with another man. Korvin follows Merle and sees her enter the home of a strange man, unaware that she was teaching him to play the piano to earn money for the family bills. He accuses Merle of being unfaithful to him and, taking their daughter with him, leaves her. Years later, in the United States, Korvin, now a prominent doctor, attends a medical convention in Chicago and, at a night-club, finds Merle playing the piano as an accompanist to Claude Rains, a rapid sketch artist. Emotionally upset at having met him, Merle shoots herself in an attempted suicide. Korvin, through a skillful operation saves her life and, when she recovers, he asks her to return home with him, pleading that their daughter was lonely. Although informed that the little girl (Sue England), now twelve years old, was under the impression that her mother had died, and that she was too young to be told the truth, Merle agrees to accompany Korvin home, despite her hatred for him. Upon their arrival, Korvin introduces Merle to his household as his second wife. Sue, however, greets her with resentment. Merle and Korvin become reconciled when she learns that he had discovered her innocence years previously, and had searched in vain for her. Yearning for Sue's love but unable to reveal herself, Merle, distraught because of the child's hatred towards her, decides to leave. But Rains, a guest at the house, by deftly sketching Sue's mental picture of her mother, which he makes to resemble Merle, helps the child to grow more understanding and is instrumental in reuniting them.

Bruce Manning, John Klorer and Leonard Lee wrote the screen play, Howard Benedict produced it, and William Dieterle directed it. The cast includes Carl Esmond, Jess Barker, Harry Davenport, Helene Thimig, Frank Morgan and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Pursuit to Algiers"**  
with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce  
(Universal, Oct. 26; time, 65 min.)

This latest of the "Sherlock Holmes" mystery melodrama is below par for the series; it is mild program fare at best, but it will probably get by with non-discriminating mystery fans. The story is a rather contrived affair, sometimes difficult to follow, and its development does not adhere to logic. Moreover, the action bogs down frequently because of excessive dialogue. Occasionally, however, a moderate amount of suspense is present. The performances of Rathbone and Bruce are standard, but the others in the cast are not shown to good advantage; at times, their acting is amateurish:—

Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce, his aide, are called upon by the Prime Minister of the mythical government of Rovenia, who reveals that his King had been assassinated, and that it was urgent that the heir to the throne, who had been attending school in England, be given safe conduct back to Rovenia to assume power; the Prime Minister feared that opposing political factions would take the young man's life. Rathbone decides to accompany the youthful heir back to Rovenia by plane, and he directs Bruce to make the trip by boat. At sea, however, Bruce is surprised when Rathbone shows up in his cabin with the young King (Leslie Vincent), explaining that he had cancelled the plane trip to foil an attempt on Vincent's life. He arranges also for Vincent to be introduced to the other passengers as Bruce's nephew. At Lisbon, three suspicious characters (Martin Kosleck, Rex Evans, and Wee Willie Davis) board the ship, and their actions soon convince Rathbone that they were bent on harming Vincent. A battle of wits ensues between Rathbone and the villainous trio, with the arch detective foiling their every attempt to kill the young King. Upon arriving at Algiers, however, the conspirators succeed in kidnapping Vincent. When friends of the young King come aboard to greet him, Rathbone reveals to the astonished Bruce that Morton Lowry, who had been their steward during the trip, was in reality the King, and that Vincent, who had been found on shore unharmed, had been posing as the King as part of Rathbone's plan to insure his safety.

Leonard Lee wrote the screen play, and Roy William Neill produced and directed it. The cast includes Marjorie Riordan, Rosalind Ivan, John Abbott and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Fallen Angel" with Alice Faye,  
Dana Andrews and Linda Darnell**  
(20th Century-Fox, December; time, 97 min.)

Combining murder and intrigue, this melodrama is an interesting entertainment of its kind, one that may do well at the box-office, but it is unpleasant. The story is sordid, and the actions of most of the characters are hardly edifying; none of them are sympathetic. For instance, Dana Andrews, the hero, is presented as a shady character, completely lacking in fine traits, who charms Alice Faye, a wholesome, small-town girl into marrying him, his idea being to mulct her out of her small inheritance so that he could take up with Linda Darnell, a waitress of questionable morals. Others interested in the waitress include a dishonorably discharged, married policeman, a slot machine salesman, and her elderly employer. The only pleasant character



is Miss Faye, but one finds it hard to sympathize with her because of her unhappiness, for at all times, before and after her marriage, she was aware of Andrews' unworthiness. There is suspense and intrigue in the second half of the picture, during which the waitress is murdered mysteriously under circumstances that point to Andrews' guilt. The manner in which he clears himself and catches the murderer leaves much to be desired, for it is done by convenient dialogue instead of by action:—

Stranded without funds in a small California town, Andrews becomes infatuated with Linda Darnell and offers to marry her. When she refuses him because of his lack of money, he sets out on a campaign to marry Alice, intending to divorce her subsequently. Alice, although warned against Andrews by her sister (Ann Revere), elopes with him. On their wedding night, Andrews steals out of the house and rushes to Percy Kilbride's restaurant to see Linda. He is followed by Alice's sister, who overhears him tell Linda that he had married Alice for her money, and that he would soon be free to marry her. Linda, however, scorns him, and rushes off on a date with Bruce Cabot, a juke box salesman. On the following morning, Linda is found murdered, and Charles Bickford, a retired New York policeman, is appointed by the local authorities to investigate her death. Andrews, questioned by Bickford as a suspect, points out that Cabot, Kilbride, or even Alice's sister, might have committed the crime. Bickford agrees, but he succeeds nevertheless in summing up a damning case of circumstantial evidence against Andrews. Lest Bickford pin the murder on him, Andrews decides to run away. Alice insists upon accompanying him, vowing her belief in his innocence. Impressed by her love and by her faith in him, Andrews determines to clear himself. By tracing a clue found at the murder scene, he succeeds in tracking down Bickford as the killer, proving that he had murdered Linda to stop her from marrying Cabot. His name cleared, Andrews vows to reform.

Harry Kleiner wrote the screen play, and Otto Preminger produced and directed it. The cast includes John Carradine, Olin Howlin and others.

Not suitable for children.

## MONOPOLY IN PRACTICE

(Continued from back page)

"With reference to Paris, Lazar told the independent, who was taking steps to build, that if the independent went ahead with his projects 'Schine' would build a 1200 seat theatre in Lexington where the independent had a theatre and that the house would be run with 10c policy at all times. \* \* \*

"At Seneca Falls, after an independent had taken steps toward building a theatre, a sign was placed on the Seneca theatre, (shortly theretofore purchased by Schine) which read: 'Closed for alterations. Will re-open soon as a Schine theatre.' Independent then discontinued efforts to build. 'Schine' did not reopen. Practically the same things recurred two years later. The same independent took steps to build. The sign re-appeared on the 'Seneca.' The independent did not go through with his plan. The 'Seneca' did not open. It had not been open in several years.

"After 'Schine' opened a theatre within a town, it was arbitrarily able to keep the independents from opening a theatre in the town with suitable run products, as in Auburn, Lockport, Mt. Vernon, Paris and Bellefontaine.

" 'Schine' was able to monopolize first run product at Corbin, Medina and Lockport even though the physical facilities of the independents in those towns were better than Schine's. He was able to monopolize the first neighborhood run in Rochester even though the physical facilities of the independents were better.

"The evidence discloses that 'Schine' cut admission prices at Corbin, Geneva, Lexington, Malone, Ogdensburg and other towns; gave out cut rate tickets in Addison, good in his Corning theatre for students, and frequently engaged in two for ones and bank nights in other towns.

"In cases of purchase or the assumption of leases other than those hereinbefore referred to, the agreements therefor provided for no competition by the independents for long periods of time. The non-competitive feature was also extended to cover outside towns. \* \* \*

"By reason of franchise agreements entered into prior to May 19, 1942, (voided thereafter, see Decree herein of that date) permitting special film rentals not given independents, 'Schine' was able to reap benefits unavailable to independents and these were utilized against independent operators as a means of restraint. These have a definite bearing on the competitive effect of buying power. \* \* \*

"Proofs connecting the distributors with certain of the aforesaid acts of defendants come from the provisions of the franchise agreements and acts of the distributors, inter-department communications of the distributors and statements made by their authorized representatives, of which numerous ones have been set forth herein. It is hardly believable that the executive officers of the distributors did not know some of the methods employed by 'Schine' in its efforts to restrict competition. \* \* \*

"In many instances the distributors refused to negotiate with the independents for runs. After 'The Circuit' came into the town, in many instances it was impossible for the independent to get a good run of major product, or even to have his requests to purchase considered. \* \* \* In these instances, when the independent attempted to make application for product, he was simply advised that the product had been sold to 'Schine' in a circuit deal.

"Special privileges were granted, as in the option of paying a percent of the gross receipts from product or flat rental, and as in deducting cost of competitive devices (bank nights, etc.) from gross before computing the distributor's share.

"Special license provisions were given by tying up second runs. \* \* \*

"In certain instances Schine's film contracts called for lower minimum admission charge than those for the independent subsequent run. \* \* \*

"There is much other evidence going to show the influence of 'Schine' with the distributors to gain preference over independent competitors and also the cooperation of the distributors with 'Schine' to the same end. \* \* \*

Judge Knight is to be commended for his painstaking task of specifying the aforementioned activities of the defendants, which he held to be unlawful. Confronted with these activities by a powerful circuit was indeed an onerous task for an independent exhibitor, and he should now be thankful that Judge Knight's decision will permit him again to engage in free competition in an open market.

of them can be classed among the top fifty in the country, and most of them are small-town and subsequent-run houses?

Moreover, it will be recalled that, during his battle with the T&D Circuit, Goldwyn, in an outburst of patriotic fervor, said the following in a statement to the press:

"Because of the monopolies existing throughout the country, the boys, when they return from the war, will practically be prohibited from entering into exhibition of motion pictures. They cannot build or occupy theatres in opposition to circuits or pooled situations without the consent of existing owners or operators, as no product of consequence will be available to them. Tentatively, Congress passed the so-called G. I. Bill of Rights, but no mention was made of the right to a free and open market to them for the exhibition of motion pictures."

Surely, a man of Sam Goldwyn's experience in this business realizes that, no matter how many soldiers may decide to enter exhibition, the largest percentage by far, possibly 99 per cent of them, will enter it as subsequent-run exhibitors, and, of the remaining one per cent, few if any will build or operate theatres that will rate among the top fifty in the country. Yet, Goldwyn, the very man whose heart bled for the returning G.I.'s, would now be willing to confine his pictures to the top fifty theatres, and thus deny to these same G.I.'s the "free and open market," and the "product of consequence," to which he had said, they were entitled.

It is difficult to understand Goldwyn's motive in assuming a disdainful attitude towards subsequent-run exhibitors, for the revenue derived from them is, as a general rule, a most important part of a picture's final gross, often the difference between success and failure. Perhaps Goldwyn thinks that a scornful attitude towards these exhibitors may frighten them into submitting to his notoriously high rental terms. Perhaps he wants to see how much he can reduce the sales resistance of the subsequent-runs by announcing that he is not solicitous of their playing time. It's a new approach, but not a good one.

There seems to be little doubt that Goldwyn's oft-expressed scorn for the smaller exhibitors stems from their continuous complaints against his excessive rental demands. But these complaints seem to be justified in view of the fact that even the big affiliated circuits, as well as large independent circuits, are constantly battling with Goldwyn over terms, often compelling him to sell away to a competitor.

It is Goldwyn's prerogative to obtain as high a price as he can for his pictures. In doing so, however, he should bear in mind that, though some of his pictures may be capable of drawing capacity audiences, this fact alone does not warrant an unusually high film rental. The exhibitor does not operate his theatre all year around for the privilege of playing one or two Goldwyn pictures for a few days.

During the course of a year, an exhibitor suffers many cuts in attendance due to a number of circumstances, particularly the weather. Often a good picture, possibly a Goldwyn picture, to which the exhibitor had given his best playing time, fails to draw because of conditions beyond his control. Consequently, to operate his business successfully, he must look to the capacity-drawing pictures, played under favorable conditions, to absorb a share of these losses. But under the terms Goldwyn demands for his pictures, a part absorption of these losses is not possible. Goldwyn wants an outlet for his pictures, but he is unwilling to participate constructively in the maintenance of that outlet. He would, in other words, have his cake and eat it.

It would be much more in harmony with his liberal policy toward his employees, if Goldwyn should announce a plan, not for the elimination of the "little fellow," the subsequent-run operator, but for the betterment of his lot.

## MONOPOLY IN PRACTICE

In its October 13 issue, HARRISON'S REPORTS called attention to the Government's victory in the Schine case, quoting portions of Judge John Knight's opinion as reported in the trade press. At that time, the full text of the opinion was not available, and the promise was made that, if the full opinion should contain information of interest to exhibitors, such information would be reported in these columns.

An official copy of the opinion discloses that Judge Knight made a comprehensive study of the evidence in the case, and from it, he deduced the methods and practices employed by the Schine circuit to effectuate an unlawful monopoly.

Since there are many exhibitors who may benefit from a knowledge of what Judge Knight held to be unlawful, portions of the opinion are herewith reproduced. It should be pointed out at the outset, however, that the entire group of corporate defendants, comprising the Schine circuit, are referred to in the opinion as "Schine," the "Schine Circuit," or as "the Circuit."

Judge Knight wrote:

"The means and methods employed by the different defendant corporations through their officers and authorized representatives to obtain a 'monopolistic' control were numerous. Principally among these were arbitrarily depriving independents of first and second run pictures, securing unreasonable clearances, making threats to build or open closed theatres to prevent construction or operation by independents, lowering admission prices, obtaining rental concessions, restricting independents who sold to Schine as to periods and places of operation, making long time franchise agreements covering the 'Circuit.' \* \* \*

"Some specific instances showing the predatory means used by 'Schine' follow.

"The Schine defendants arbitrarily deprived independents of the first run product which they had previously enjoyed in several towns. \* \* \* (Ed. Note: There follows a list of towns and the years involved.)

"Independents were arbitrarily deprived of second run product which they had previously exhibited, \* \* \* Relative to six towns including Corning, Lynch wrote on October 21, 1933, Metro: 'If there are any other opposition towns where you believe you can sell a second run, I would appreciate it if you would take the matter up with me first before selling.' In 1932 Lynch wrote Flynn a letter say, among other things: 'I want you to refrain from selling him (independent) any pictures whatsoever.' and Metro through Flynn agreed not to do so. Lynch also wired Fox to withhold selling to this independent and wrote Fox' agent saying 'have also asked him (Schmertz—Fox agent) to refrain from selling this man second run.'

"'Schine' was able to secure unreasonable clearances year after year in many towns. A few only need to be mentioned. \* \* \* (Ed. Note: There follows a list of towns with clearance ranging from 90 days to 180 days.)

"The license contracts with 'Schine' in many instances specified minimum admission prices for the various runs as well as clearance period. To an extent this affects adversely the time given the competitor. Interstate Circuit v. United States, supra, clearly points the reasons for condemning such provisions in a film license contract or agreement. Schine got clearance \* \* \* where none existed before.

"'Schine' made threats to build in various towns, such as Paris, where there was a sign up, Canadaigua by a sign and newspaper article published, and where he eventually did build. \* \* \*

"Defendants' authorized agents made statements to independents which are reasonably construed as threats. \* \* \*

(Continued on inside page)



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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1945

No. 44

### SOME FANCY DOUBLE BILLING

"Do you buy all your pictures flat rental?" queries Pete Wood in a recent service bulletin to the members of his Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio. "If you don't," continues Wood, "would you like to? Fox West Coast Theatres must, because here are some of the programs shown in many of the several hundred Fox West Coast Theatres:

- "1. 'Christmas in Connecticut' with 'Over 21'
- "2. 'Anchors Aweigh' with 'G. I. Joe'
- "3. 'Over 21' with 'Junior Miss'
- "4. 'Over 21' with 'G. I. Joe'
- "5. 'For Whom the Bell Tolls' with 'Music for Millions'
- "6. 'Meet Me in St. Louis' with 'To Have and Have Not'
- "7. 'Keys of the Kingdom' with 'Frenchman's Creek'
- "8. 'Can't Help Singing' with 'I'll Be Seeing You'
- "9. 'Frenchman's Creek' with 'I'll Be Seeing You'
- "10. 'Wilson' with 'Those Endearing Young Charms'
- "11. 'Thrill of a Romance' with '1001 Nights'

"To the first Ohio exhibitor reporting that he has been able to buy all or most of the above pictures flat rental, we will present the fifty yard line from the Ohio State Stadium," concludes the bulletin.

In the aforementioned double-bills cited by Pete Wood, each of the eight major distributors is represented by one or more pictures, indicating clearly that there is justification for the oft-expressed cry of the small exhibitor that the sales policies of the major companies are discriminatory.

Any sales policy that enables either affiliated circuits or large independent circuits to double-bill features of the calibre shown, but which, by reason of the rental terms demanded, prohibits a small exhibitor from showing similar double-bills, cannot be anything but discriminatory, particularly since, in most instances, the small exhibitor has to play both pictures on a percentage basis.

It would be interesting to know how many independent exhibitors bought some of the aforementioned pictures under contracts that prohibited double-billing.

Last May, the writer was present at a press conference, during which Mr. George Schaefer, chairman of Lester Cowan Productions, specifically stated that the "Story of G. I. Joe," which is included in the aforementioned double-bills, would be sold on percentage only, and that under no circumstances would an exhibitor be permitted to show the picture with

a second feature. Did Mr. Schaefer inaugurate such a policy for the small independent exhibitors only? It would seem that way, even though he said nothing at the time to indicate that any distinctions would be made.

A sales policy that allows circuit houses to double-bill two "A" features is discriminatory, not only because it fails to give the small independent exhibitor an equal opportunity, but also because it tends to reduce the potential drawing power of each of the "A" pictures when it is later played by the independent exhibitor; the motion picture-goer in the particular area involved rightfully feels that he would prefer to pay a slightly higher admission fee to a circuit house for the privilege of seeing two "A" features than to pay a lower admission price twice to see the same two features at the independent's theatre.

It is bad enough that the independent exhibitor is hamstrung by the clearances that circuit houses generally enjoy over him, but why kick him when he's down?

### AN INTERIM REPORT ON THE NEW YORK ANTI-TRUST TRIAL

The New York anti-trust trial is progressing at a speed that is astonishing most observers, who had anticipated that the trial would require many months.

At this writing, the feeling prevails that the five major distributors might complete their defense by the end of this week, and that Columbia, Universal and United Artists, the "Little Three," could complete their case during the following week.

The trial has been expedited thus far through the admission of stipulated testimony instead of direct testimony on behalf of numerous executives of the defendant companies, a procedure to which Robert Wright, the Government's trial attorney agreed, reserving the right to call the witnesses for cross-examination, if necessary.

Ever since the trial resumed on October 22, after a recess of eleven days, the proceedings have been marked by a parade of leading executives who took the witness stand in an attempt to disprove the Government's charges of monopoly.

Under the careful guidance of the defense attorneys, these executives outlined the general set-up of their distribution, production, and theatre departments, each testifying in detail as to the inner workings of the department he heads and as to the competition to be met from similar departments of the co-defendant companies, as well as from independent companies. All this testimony was, of course, aimed at refuting the Government's charges point by point.

(Continued on last page)

### **"Confidential Agent" with Charles Boyer and Lauren Bacall**

(Warner Bros. Nov. 10; time, 118 min.)

With Charles Boyer and Lauren Bacall heading the cast, "Confidential Agent" may do well at the box-office; as entertainment, it ranges from fair to good, but, because of its anti-fascist theme, which is somewhat outdated, it will probably be received by most picture-goers with mixed feelings. The action revolves around a Spanish Loyalist agent, who comes to England in 1937, at the time of the Spanish Civil War, to prevent agents of the Spanish Fascists from obtaining shipments of English coal. The story is filled with intrigue, has many exciting moments, and is for the most part interesting, but it will not stand up under a close analysis, for it leans too heavily on coincidence. Frequently, the action bogs down. Moreover, too much time is taken to establish the story. As a matter of fact, some judicious cutting could reduce the overlong running time. The performances are generally good, with Peter Lorre contributing an outstanding characterization of a frightened traitor. Lauren Bacall, who showed much promise in "To Have and Have Not," is somewhat disappointing; she overacts. The production values are first rate:—

Arriving in England to negotiate with a British coal magnate to prevent the sale of coal to the Fascists, Boyer, a Loyalist agent, meets Lauren Bacall, the magnate's aloof daughter, who, unaware of his identity or mission, offers him a lift to London. They are followed by Victor Francen, a ruthless Fascist agent, whose chauffeur thrashes Boyer in an unsuccessful attempt to steal his credentials. In London, Boyer makes contact with two co-agents, Katina Paxinou, owner of a small hotel, and Peter Lorre, only to discover that both had turned traitor, having been bribed by Francen. When he refuses to join them, they murder a 14-year-old servant girl, whom Boyer had befriended, and frame him on a fake murder charge. Meanwhile Francen's henchmen steal Boyer's credentials, preventing him from negotiating with Lauren's father. Determined to see his mission through, and to avenge the murder of the young girl, Boyer, aided by Lauren, who had become sympathetic to his cause, eludes the police. Through a series of strange adventures, he tracks down both Katina and Lorre and, without being directly responsible for their deaths, has the satisfaction of seeing them die. Then, upon learning that Francen had concluded a deal with Lauren's father, Boyer goes directly to the coal miners and makes an impassioned plea to them not to mine the coal. The English papers publicize his action and condemn the coal magnate, compelling him to cancel the contract. His mission fulfilled, Boyer, still wanted by the police, is helped to escape from England by Lauren, who joins him on a tramp steamer.

Robert Buckner produced it, and Herman Shumlin directed it. The cast includes Wanda Hendrix, George Coulouris, John Warburton, George Zucco and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Voice of the Whistler" with Richard Dix and Lynn Merrick**

(Columbia, Oct. 30; time, 60 min.)

Fairly interesting but unpleasant program fare. The first part of the picture, which deals with the loneliness and ill health of a wealthy industrialist, has considerable human interest, for all the principal

characters are shown as kindly persons with fine traits. The story, however, soon develops into a murder melodrama, in which the actions of the main characters undergo an abrupt change, each committing acts that are far from commendable. Consequently, one feels no sympathy for them. The direction is good, and the acting competent. Some of the situations generate considerable suspense. Because of the manner in which the murder is planned and committed, the picture is unsuitable for children:—

Ill in health and lacking true friends, Richard Dix, an industrialist, leaves for a vacation on the Great Lakes. Arriving in Chicago, he suffers a heart attack as he boards a taxicab. Rhys Williams, the driver, takes him to his boarding house and nurses him back to health. Williams, a friendly, sincere chap, persuades Dix to visit a neighborhood clinic, where he meets Lynn Merrick, a nurse, who was engaged to James Cardwell, a young interne. Clinic physicians, informing Dix that he had only a few months to live, advise him to go to the Maine seacoast. Impressed by Lynn's friendliness, Dix asks her to marry him, offering to leave her his entire fortune in return for the short time she would have to spend with him. Lynn accepts, planning to use the money to marry Cardwell after Dix's death. Cardwell, angry, breaks with her. Accompanied by Williams, Dix and Lynn go to Maine and establish residence in an abandoned lighthouse. The outdoor life gives Dix a new lease on life and, after six months, he finds himself madly in love with Lynn. But Lynn, tired of the secluded life they led, openly regrets the bargain. When Cardwell arrives unexpectedly for a visit, Dix, noting that Lynn was still in love with him, becomes insanely jealous but masks his feelings. Both men, though outwardly friendly, plan to do away with one another. A battle of wits ensues between the two, with Cardwell being murdered by Dix after an unsuccessful attempt on the latter's life. Dix attempts to make it appear as if Cardwell had died accidentally, but Lynn, having witnessed the crime, summons the police. Dix is sentenced to the electric chair, while Lynn commits herself to a life of solitude in the lighthouse.

Wilfred H. Pettitt and William Castle wrote the screen play, Rudolph C. Flothow produced it, and Mr. Castle directed it. The cast includes Tom Kennedy, Frank Reicher and others.

### **"The Tiger Woman" with Adele Mara and Kane Richmond**

(Republic, Nov. 16; time, 57 min.)

Just a minor program murder-mystery melodrama, revolving around the murderous machinations of a night-club singer. The action is slow-moving and, since one has little trouble in figuring out the solution, one's interest lags. Moreover, much of the plot, particularly at the start, is developed by means of lengthy dialogue, and unless one pays close attention to the screen one would not know what the story was all about. There is no human interest, since none of the characters, not even the hero, who brings the murderess to justice, are presented in an appealing manner:—

Adele Mara, whose husband owned the night-club where she sang, carries on a secret love affair with Richard Fraser, her husband's business partner. Fearing that her husband may be killed by a gangster, to whom he owed a huge gambling debt, and that Fraser, because of their love affair, may be blamed by the police for the crime, Adele enlists the aid of Kane



Richmond, a private detective, to protect him. Later, when Adele and Fraser visit her husband to ask him for a divorce, they find him shot dead. A suicide note beside the body asks Fraser to see to it that Adele collects the \$100,000 insurance money he carried on his life. When Fraser points out that a suicide clause in the policy invalidated the claim, Adele induces him to burn the note so that her husband's death would look like murder. Testimony offered by Adele at the coroner's inquest convinces the police that her husband was murdered and enables her to collect the insurance money. But Richmond, unconvinced, becomes suspicious and starts an investigation of his own. Through clever strategy, he drives Fraser to the verge of a voluntary confession to the police, but Adele, to stop the confession, murders him, making it appear as if he had committed suicide to atone for killing her husband. Richmond, however, discovers a clue indicating that Adele was responsible for both murders. Lacking conclusive evidence, he makes love to Adele and tricks her into a confession that is overheard by the police.

George Carelton Brown wrote the screen play, Dorrell and Stuart E. McGowen produced it, and Philip Ford directed it. The cast includes Perry Stewart, Cy Kendall, Beverly Loyd, Gregory Gay and others.

Not suitable for children.

### **"Crimson Canary" with Noah Beery, Jr. and Lois Collier**

(Universal, Nov. 9; time, 64 min.)

Murder mystery and "hot swing" music have been blended effectively in this program melodrama; the combination should please both the mystery fans and those who enjoy popular music. Although the murderer's identity is not disclosed until the finish, one does not find it too difficult to guess who he is early in the proceedings; nevertheless, the story holds one's interest fairly well. The musical portions of the picture are very entertaining, often more enjoyable than the story itself. On the whole, the picture represents a good effort at something different in program type pictures:—

Claudia Drake, singer in Steve Geray's Los Angeles night-club, is murdered mysteriously under circumstances that point suspicion on both Noah Beery, Jr. and Danny Morton, members of a "swing" band, whose other members included Steve Brodie, Jimmie Dodd, and Johnny Kellogg. Claudia, a disreputable flirt, had been warned by Beery to stay away from Morton, who had taken to drink because she had jilted him. The boys leave town before Claudia's body is discovered, each agreeing to go to a different city so that the police could not trace them. Detective John Litel, a "hot" music fan, is assigned to the case and, through a recording made by the boys at the club, he is enabled to find Beery in San Francisco, where he played the trumpet in a local cafe; Litel recognized the tone of the trumpet. Although Litel does not arrest him, hoping that he will lead him to the other boys, Beery becomes aware that he was being watched. He confides his troubles to Lois Collier, his fiancée, who urges him to surrender. When Beery refuses, they quarrel. Believing that he could prove conclusively through one of his recordings that he and the others were on the bandstand at the time of the murder, Beery rounds up his friends and returns to Geray's club. Litel joins them, but their alibi is destroyed when the recording in question falls to floor and breaks.

Meanwhile Lois, who had come to Los Angeles, had been carrying on an investigation of her own, and through Claudia's roommate she uncovers important clues that unmask Geray as the killer.

Henry Blankfort and Peggy Phillips wrote the screen play, Mr. Blankfort produced it, and John Hoffman directed it. The cast includes the Esquire All-American Band Winners, Coleman Hawkins, Oscar Pettiford, Josh White and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Spellbound" with Ingrid Bergman and Gregory Peck**

(United Artists; no release date set; time, 110 min.)

Very Good! Blending psychoanalysis, psychiatry, murder-mystery, and appealing romance, David O. Selznick has fashioned a powerful drama for adults, endowing it with superb production values, and Alfred Hitchcock, in keeping with his reputation for building up thrilling situations that hold one in tense suspense, has applied his directorial skill in a masterful way. Although the picture's appeal may be directed more to class audiences than to the masses, since it employs psychiatry and psychoanalysis for the background, basis, and solution of the story, and since it resorts at times to much technical scientific dialogue, it will probably draw to the box-office also the masses, not only because of the stars' popularity, but also because it has been handled in a manner that enables the average person to understand fully the gist of the story even though the complexities of its Freudian theme may remain hazy.

Briefly, the story revolves around Gregory Peck, as an amnesia victim, who is suspected of murdering a famous psychiatrist, his doctor, whom he attempts to impersonate as head of an institution for the mentally unbalanced. Ingrid Bergman, as a woman psychiatrist on the staff of the institution, falls in love with him and, despite his belief that he may have committed the crime, since he had no recollection of his past, tries desperately to shield him from the police and to save him from punishment because, she was blindly-sure that he was innocent. Risking her life, because of the danger that Peck might become berserk momentarily, Ingrid probes his mind to learn the cause of his psychosis and amnesia and, through an analysis of one of his dreams, succeeds in establishing his identity, as well as past events in his life. Then, through applied psychoanalysis, she proves to him that he was innocent of the crime, thus restoring his sanity. Circumstantial evidence, however, points to Peck as the killer, and the police jail him for the crime. But Ingrid, undaunted, sets forth in pursuit of the real murderer and, in a final sequence that builds steadily to an absorbing climax, pins the guilt on Leo G. Carroll, former head of the institution, whom the murdered man was to replace.

The performances of the entire cast are superior, and throughout the action an overtone of suspense and terror, tinged with touches of deep human interest and appealing romance, is sustained. A weird dream sequence designed by Salvador Dali, the Spanish artist, the sets of which supposedly depict the dream life of Peck's disordered mind, is highly fantastic but most interesting.

Ben Hecht wrote the screen play from the novel, "The House of Dr. Edwards." The cast includes John Emory, Steven Geray, Wallace Ford, Michael Chekhov and many others.



Mr. Wright, however, was right on his toes with his cross-examination of these witnesses, succeeding many times in drawing from them admissions that, to many observers, appeared damaging to the defense. One highlight, for example, was the confirmation from some of these witnesses that their companies omitted from their license agreements with affiliated theatres stipulations governing admission prices.

Another highlight of the trial was Wright's endeavor to show the Court that the defendants exercised arbitrary control over the operations of independent subsequent-run exhibitors. He cited as an example the dispute between Paramount and the Loew's circuit in New York City over rental terms, revealing that, from September 1943 to May 1945, pending settlement of the dispute, no Paramount pictures were made available to subsequent-run exhibitors in the New York area, even in the absence of any written contract between Paramount and Loew's.

Still another highlight was when he brought out that Paramount had given to the Evergreen Circuit in Seattle, a 20th Century-Fox affiliate, a so-called "formula deal," which is similar to the deals made by Paramount with its own affiliated theatres. Under this "formula deal," the circuit's film rental on each picture is determined by the national gross of the picture, exclusive of the circuit's gross on that picture. The percentage rate to be paid by the circuit was thus fixed after the picture had established its earning power in theatres throughout the country, and all element of risk was eliminated for the circuit in its film buying.

### A NOVEL IDEA

Daily, my desk is flooded with publicity releases from the different motion picture committees in charge of the Victory Bond Drive. Most of the schemes they have devised to help exhibitors sell more bonds are excellent, and some of them are nothing short of amazing. Lack of space prevents me from reproducing some of their imaginative suggestions; besides, most of you know about them, for the other trade papers, which have more space, are doing an excellent job of keeping you posted.

An example of this imaginative thinking is to be found in the Victory Queen Contest, one of the most potent bond-selling plans yet devised, details of which were announced this week by Charles P. Skouras, regional chairman of the eleven western states. Briefly, the contest, which is limited to California, Washington, Arizona, and Oregon, calls for the selection of a "Queen" from each of those states. Every town in the Pacific area is asked to participate. Any young woman between the ages of 18 and 26 is eligible to enter the contest, and, in each town, the winner will be selected on the basis of bond sales exclusively. The town "Queen" candidates will then compete against other town "Queens" for the title of "County Queen," and these winners will in turn compete for the title of "State Queen." Finally, the "State Queens" will compete in Hollywood for the title of "Victory Queen," with a one year screen contract from a major studio as the grand prize.

Space does not permit an outline of the contest's rules, but I may say that they give each contestant a fair and equal chance. Most important of all, they are designed to boost bond sales.

The idea is so good that, if possible, it should be extended to every state in the union. It is the sort of contest that will catch the public's fancy.

### TAKING GOLDWYN AT HIS WORD

Samuel Goldwyn's recent statement to the effect that subsequent-run bookings are "economically unattractive" to him, and that he would be willing to forego them if he could get his pictures booked into fifty top first-run theatres throughout the country, with seating capacities of from 1200 to 1400, seems to have raised the ire of exhibitors everywhere.

Typical of the general feeling is the following statement from a recent ITO of Ohio bulletin, titled, "Let's Make Sam's Wish Come True":

"In plain unadulterated English, Goldwyn has served notice on the thousands of small theatre owners throughout the country, and the millions of theatre-goers who patronize these low-priced theatres, that he just doesn't give a damn about having any business dealings with the former, and if the latter desire to see Goldwyn productions, they'll have to patronize the *fifty top first-run high-priced theatres* to which the showing of all future Goldwyn pictures will be restricted.

"We admire Sam for being so outspoken, and in order to help him in his desire to have his pictures shown in *as few theatres as possible*, we are forming the 'Make-It-Easy-For-Sam Goldwyn League,' which you are hereby invited to join. \* \* \*

The bulletin then invites the ITO members to fill out a membership application, in which the signers resolve to do all they possibly can to cooperate with Goldwyn by not showing his pictures in their theatres.

Well, Goldwyn asked for it.

### ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

The following is from a Paramount publicity department release:

"Good will is a tangible, marketable and liquid asset when applied to sales policy, in the opinion of Hugh Owen, Paramount Divisional Sales Manager, who has just returned from an extended trip through the Southern territories.

"With many exhibitor situations faced with depleted populations due to post-war shifts from war plants and service decampments, the Paramount sales policy of flexibility to meet these situations is paying off, said Owen.

"Rather than adhere to a rigid policy that may work hardships on individual situations, Owen, in line with Paramount's policy set up by Charles M. Reagan, vice-president in charge of distribution, went over each situation with the exchange salesmen concerned, and worked out a flexibility of sales terms applicable in terms of conditions existing in each particular locale. In the long run, Owen contended, this is definitely good-will in exhibitor relations, negotiable when a salesman sits down with an exhibitor at future dates."

Here is an expression of an attitude for which Paramount, Mr. Reagan and Mr. Owen should be commended. Unfortunately, however, expressions of willingness to recognize changed conditions in individual situations, and to make proper adjustments, have been made before, not only by Paramount, but also by most of the other film distributors. Despite these expressions, the exhibitors' complaints against outlandish rental terms are constantly increasing, which is an indication that the adjustments, both in character and in number, are inadequate.

What the exhibitors need are fewer expressions of "what we intend to do," and more deeds.



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Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1945

No. 45

### Has the Independent Producer an Open Market?

Ever since the Government's New York anti-trust suit against the eight major companies got under way several weeks ago, the defense attorneys have persistently tried to compel Robert L. Wright, the Government's trial attorney, to remove from his case the issue of monopoly in production.

The issue has been the subject of much spirited discussion during the trial, with Wright maintaining that the alleged monopoly in distribution and exhibition enjoyed by the defendants narrows, in effect, the freedom of opportunity for independent producers and, consequently, serves to create a restraint in production.

The defense attorneys have countered this contention with claims that there is the most intensive competition between the defendants and independent producers for the acquisition of stories and of talent, and that any independent producer with a good picture can get distribution for it.

Asked by the Court if the Government claimed monopoly in production, Wright replied: "Only to this extent—if an independent producer wants to recoup the cost of production he must secure a major release for his product." Wright admitted to the Court that he had no specific evidence of monopoly in production, and he conceded that there was free competition insofar as the acquisition of stories and talent are concerned, but he reiterated his claim that the defendants' alleged control of the distribution and exhibition markets had a restrictive control on the production activities of an independent producer.

It appears to many observers at the trial that, thus far, the Government has not made out much of a case with respect to monopoly in production.

It is true that an independent producer, within the limitations set by his financial resources, can compete freely for the acquisition of story properties and for most anything else required to produce a motion picture. But we cannot get away from the fact that, under the present set-up of distribution and exhibition, the independent producer, particularly the one who makes quality productions at a cost comparable to the finest produced by the major companies, is able to recoup his production costs and make a profit on his picture in only one way—through a distribution arrangement with one of the major distributors. And if his deal should be with one of the non-theatre-owning distributors, his chances of recouping production costs plus profit are lessened to a considerable degree, for, according to the Government's allegations, the five theatre-owning companies, who themselves produce and distribute the majority of so-called "A" features released each year, make available to the non-theatre-

owning distributors only such playing time as may remain after they have taken care of one another's needs.

When we take into consideration the defendants' claim (as testified to at the trial by William F. Rodgers, vice-president and general sales manager of MGM) that the income from affiliated theatres covers no more than the production costs of a picture, while the income from the independent theatres makes up the profit, it can readily be seen that the theatre-owning producers, who control the available playing time of the theatres that pay production costs, are in a position to exert the power of life or death over the operations of an independent producer.

The defense attorneys have, of course, made the claim that no independent producer with a good picture has any difficulty getting it distributed and exhibited. Broadly speaking, this claim may be true. But it does not answer the question that is always vital to the producer who wants to make an "A" quality picture. That question is whether or not the independent producer's picture will be exhibited by the affiliated theatres in a manner and under conditions that will afford it the same freedom of economic opportunity that is accorded the pictures of the major companies, assuming, of course, that the rental terms of the independent's picture are within reason, and that the picture has popular appeal.

Unanswered are also the questions: 1. Does the independent's picture receive the preferred playing time it deserves? 2. Is it automatically held over if the gross at the end of the week reaches a certain figure, such as is done with the pictures of a major producer?

Here are only a few of the important questions that have been overlooked by the defense attorneys when they made their claim that an independent producer with a good picture has a ready outlet. And yet the answers to these questions are of the utmost importance in determining whether existing conditions tend, either to encourage, or to discourage, independent production.

The independent exhibitor is vitally interested in this issue, for any condition that tends to discourage independent production tends also to affect the quality of pictures in general; with the competition of the independent producers of quality pictures out of the way, the major producers will have less reason to strive for better pictures, with the result that the already large percentage of poor pictures released each year may increase.

For many years, HARRISON'S REPORTS has urged the independent exhibitors to support the independent producers, because it felt, as it still feels, that such

(Continued on last page)



### **"Dakota" with John Wayne and Vera Hruba Ralston**

(Republic, no release date set; time, 82 min.)

This outdoor melodrama is a fairly good entertainment of its kind. The Western-like story and its treatment offer little in the way of originality, and it is somewhat deficient in the excitement one expects to find in a picture of this type, yet it contains enough thrills, suspense, human interest, and comedy, to put it across with most audiences. John Wayne, as the hero, is his usual rugged, stalwart self, risking his life to prevent a gang of crooks from swindling poor wheat farmers of their land. Walter Brennan, as an irascible, bel-lowing river boat captain, provides most of the comedy, of which the picture has a good share. Vera Hruba Ralston, as Wayne's "cute" bride, is just passable. The most thrilling part of the picture comes at the finish, where the thieves set fire to the farmers' wheat in an unsuccessful effort to grab their lands. It makes for a spectacular blaze. The action takes place in 1870:—

Against the wishes of her father, a Chicago railroad tycoon, Vera elopes with Wayne, a professional gambler. Wayne favors going to California, but his head-strong bride steers him to Dakota, explaining that her father planned to extend his railroad to that territory, and that they could use their combined fortune of \$20,000 to buy options on land, then sell to her father at a profit. Ward Bond and Mike Mazurki, fellow travelers on the stagecoach, question the couple and suspect their reason for going to Dakota. Meanwhile Wayne had learned that the two men were political powers in Dakota, and that they were in the midst of a vicious campaign to drive the wheat farmers out of the territory. On board a river boat bound for Fargo, two of Bond's henchmen steal Wayne's \$20,000 at the point of a gun. Arriving in Fargo, Wayne teams up with the wheat farmers in opposition to Bond and his gang. Several attempts are made on Wayne's life, but Wayne foils Bond at every turn. Finally, through shrewd manipulations, Wayne outsmarts Bond and tricks him into signing away his ill-gotten rights to the farmers' lands. Learning of the ruse, Bond, in a last desperate attempt to regain his control, orders his henchmen to set fire to the wheat fields. The blaze, however, is brought under control, and Bond prepares to abscond with Wayne's \$20,000. Mazurki kills him in a fight over the loot, and Wayne, in turn, thrashes Mazurki to recover his money. With law and order restored to the town, Wayne and his bride settle down to await the coming of the railroad.

Lawrence Hazard wrote the screen play, and Joseph Kane produced and directed it. The cast includes Ona Munson, Hugo Haas, George Cleveland, Paul Fix and others.

### **"How Do You Do" with Bert Gordon, Cheryl Walker and Frank Albertson**

(PRC, Dec. 17; time, 80 min.)

A mirth-provoking combination of comedy, music, and murder-mystery; it should serve well as a supporting feature wherever something light is needed to round out a double-bill. It is a non-sensical type of comedy, in which the players, as themselves, enact their individual roles in a tongue-in-cheek fashion, poking fun at both the picture and themselves. Bert Gordon, the "Mad Russian" of radio fame, provokes many laughs with his quips and his antics. An amusing twist is provided by Gordon's recruiting of a number of character actors, known to most audiences for their portrayals as screen detectives, to solve the crime. The picture has a trick ending that is both novel and comical. Harry Von Zell, the radio announcer, is good in a supporting role, as is Ella Mae Morse, who sings two songs in her typical "boogie-woogie" style:—

Upon the completion of their radio series, Gordon, Von Zell, Cheryl, Ella, and Claire Windsor, go to a desert hotel for a vacation. On their first day, they, along with the other guests in the hotel, find themselves suspected of the murder of a despised radio agent. To add to their dismay, Frank Albertson, a reporter, arrives on the scene, making them

vulnerable to unfavorable publicity. Confusion reigns when the body suddenly disappears, and the sheriff prohibits any one from leaving the hotel. In desperation, Gordon sends telegrams to Keye Luke, James Burke, Thomas Jackson, Fred Kelsey, and Leslie Dennison, all screen detectives, to come to his aid. Their arrival serves only to create more chaos as they apply their screen technique in an attempt to solve the crime. Eventually, after many incidents in which the body appears and disappears several times, the "corpse" walks into the hotel and explains that he was very much alive; he had been a human guinea pig for his doctor, who was experimenting with a new heart disease cure, which caused a patient's heart to stop beating for 72 hours.

The trick finish shows Gordon in a projection room, stating to the producer that audiences would not accept the picture if the "corpse" comes back alive. He thereupon calls for a re-run of the final sequence and, from his projection room seat, fires a shot at the "living corpse" on the screen, causing his body to fall down in a heap.

Harry Sauber and Joseph Carole wrote the screen play, Mr. Sauber produced it, and Ralph Murphy directed it.

### **"She Wouldn't Say Yes" with Rosalind Russell and Lee Bowman**

(Columbia, no release date set, time, 86 min.)

In spite of the fact that the story is thin, this is a pretty good light comedy, the sort that should go over well with the rank and file. It centers around the romance that comes into the life of an accomplished woman psychiatrist, who had always maintained that she was immune to the emotions of love. The spectator is kept chuckling throughout by the many mirth-provoking situations, particularly those that are brought about by the attempts of Lee Bowman, her suitor, and Charles Winninger, her father, to break down her resistance. The height of comedy is reached in the situation where Winninger tricks her into marrying Bowman by leading her to believe that she was participating in a mock marriage; the manner in which he accomplishes this is highly amusing. Rosalind Russell, as the woman doctor, is delightful; it is the sort of role her fans will enjoy seeing her play:—

Through the impish machinations of a ticket clerk, Rosalind and Bowman, total strangers, are sold the same upper berth on a train bound for Chicago. Bowman, a gay war correspondent, makes the most of the mix-up to start a romance with Rosalind, but she brushes him off. Responding to the appeal of a trainman for a doctor, Rosalind goes to the aid of an hysterical Latin-American blonde (Adele Jergens), who had tried to kill herself because she fancied that her kisses were fatal to men. Rosalind offers to try to cure her fixation when they reach Chicago. On the following day, Bowman, still romantically inclined, traces Rosalind to her Chicago home, where he meets Charles Winninger, her father, who, too, was a psychiatrist. Winninger takes a liking to Bowman and offers to help break down Rosalind's resistance. Meanwhile Rosalind busies herself with Adele, and learns that her fixation included a desire for other women's men. To help her, Rosalind conspires to allow Bowman to think that she (Rosalind) was in love with him, so that Adele would become attracted to him. In the meantime Winninger tricks Rosalind into marrying Bowman under the guise of a mock marriage. When she learns that the marriage was real, Rosalind, at first outraged, soon yields to Bowman's kisses. Their embrace, however, is followed by a quarrel when Bowman learns that she had considered yielding to him just to make him interesting to Adele. Infuriated, he leaves her, threatening to take up with Adele. The prospect of losing him to Adele awakens Rosalind's emotions, and it all ends with both of them sharing the same upper berth.

Virginia Van Upp, John Jacoby, and Sarett Tobias wrote the screen play, Miss Van Upp produced it, and Alexander Hall directed it. The cast includes Harry Davenport, Sara Haden, Percy Kilbride and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



### **"Detour" with Tom Neal and Ann Savage** (PRC, Nov. 30; time, 68 min.)

Martin Goldsmith's novel about the misadventures of a well-intentioned young man, who hitchhikes his way across country to join his sweetheart, has been fashioned into an absorbing melodrama by PRC; it should make a strong supporting feature, for it grips one's interest from start to finish. Tom Neal and Ann Savage give outstanding performances. As the young man who is victimized by a blackmailing tart, after becoming involved innocently in an accidental death, Neal interprets a difficult role with deep understanding. One is at all times sympathetic towards him, for the tragedy that enters his life is caused by a peculiar set of circumstances that place him in an untenable position. As the tart, Ann Savage is cruel and ruthless, yet pitiable. The manner in which Neal inadvertently murders her is ingenious. Well produced and directed, the picture sustains a tense mood throughout:—

Eager to join his sweetheart (Claudia Drake) in Hollywood, Neal, a penniless New York musician, hitchhikes across country. In Arizona, he is given a lift by Edmund MacDonald, a dissipated socialite, who had run away from home as a boy. MacDonald, observing that Neal had noticed a bad gash on his arm, explains that he had been clawed by a girl hitchhiker, with whom he had become too friendly. While Neal drives, MacDonald, sleepy, tumbles out of the car and is killed accidentally. Neal, fearing that he would be accused of murder, changes identities with the dead man, and continues to drive the car toward Los Angeles. En route, he offers a ride to Ann Savage, a weary-looking hitchhiker. Ann, uncommunicative at first, suddenly turns to Neal and asks him what he had done with MacDonald's body; he soon realizes that she was the girl who had clawed the dead man. Neal explains his innocence, but Ann threatens to turn him over to the police unless he sells the car and gives her the proceeds. Helpless, Neal agrees. When they reach Los Angeles, Ann learns from a news story that MacDonald's father, a millionaire, was dying, and that he wished to contact his missing son. She tries to compel Neal to present himself as the missing heir, offering to divide the inheritance with him. When Neal refuses, Ann picks up the telephone to call the police. Neal tries to stop her and, in the ensuing struggle, the telephone wire forms a noose around her neck, strangling her accidentally. Blind with terror, Neal takes to the road again, but he is soon picked up by the police.

Martin Goldsmith wrote the screen play, Leon Fromkess and Martin Mooney produced it, and Edgar G. Ulmer directed it.

Not suitable for children.

### **"Girls of the Big House" with Lynne Roberts and Virginia Christine**

(Republic, Nov. 2; time, 68 min.)

Just a moderately entertaining program prison melodrama. The chief fault with the story is that it lacks plausibility; as for instance the fact that the heroine, though innocent, confesses to a crime and goes to prison rather than have her father learn that she was suspected. There is mild suspense here and there, but on the whole the doings of the chief characters are not so interesting, and in some instances unbelievable. For instance, it is difficult to believe that the heroine, after breaking out of jail with the greatest of ease, can visit her home town for a few days without being caught by the police who were searching for her, particularly since they had her home address and since she made no effort to hide. There are numerous other illogical happenings. The fairly good performances of the players saves the picture from being mediocre:—

Although innocently involved in the theft of a wallet, Lynne Roberts confesses to the crime lest her father, a college president, learn that she was in trouble. In prison, she finds herself in the company of Virginia Christine, an habit-

ual criminal, and of Tala Birell, a murderess, who had mistakenly killed another man while lying in wait for her husband and his girl-friend. Tala was unaware that Virginia was the woman who stole her husband. Because of her inability to send letters to her father without the prison postmark, Lynne breaks out of jail. She visits her home town and, after spending two days with her father and with Richard Powers, her boy-friend, a young attorney, she voluntarily returns to prison, first arranging with a kindly postmistress for her letters to reach home without the prison postmark. Back in jail, Lynne is punished for her break. Virginia, sympathizing with her, manages to get word to Powers of her plight. Her kindly feelings toward Lynne change, however, when Tala's husband visits the prison and pays undue attention to her. Insanely jealous, Virginia attacks Lynne with a knife. As a result of the incident, Tala learns of Virginia's association with her husband, and kills her. Meanwhile Powers, having investigated into the cause of Lynne's imprisonment, proves her innocence and gains her freedom.

Houston Branch wrote the screen play, Rudolph E. Abel produced it, and George Archainbaud directed it. The cast includes Adele Mara and others.

Not suitable for children.

### **"Allotment Wives" with Kay Francis and Paul Kelly**

(Monogram, Nov. 17; time, 80 min.)

As entertainment, this crime melodrama is just fair, but it may do better than average business because of its timely, exploitable subject—women bigamists who marry several servicemen to collect allotment and insurance benefits from the Government, a practice that has received wide publicity in the nation's newspapers. A gangster-picture formula has been employed to tell the story, which deals with the machinations of a crime ring that organizes the women and teaches them how to prey on servicemen, offering them protection in return for a share of the benefits collected. It is a rather sketchily told tale, involving murder, kidnapping, and blackmail, and occasionally it resorts to preachment. Paul Kelly, as the secret investigator who exposes and smashes the crime syndicate, is believable, but Kay Francis, as head of the ring, and Otto Kruger, as her lieutenant, fail to make their characterizations convincing:—

Kelly, a colonel in the Army, is asked by the Office of Dependency Benefits to investigate the increase of bigamous claims. Posing as a reporter, Kelly soon establishes that a crime syndicate had organized the racket, and he sets out to find its leaders. In the course of his investigation, he makes the acquaintance of Kay Francis, a socially prominent businesswoman, unaware that she was the secret leader of the ring. Kay, a reform school "graduate," had turned to organized crime in order to give her daughter (Teala Loring) the better things in life. She cleverly uses her friendship with Kelly to check on his movements. When Gertrude Michael, one of the "allotment wives," learns of Kay's connection with the ring, she attempts to blackmail her. Failing this, she entices Kay's daughter, a weak sort, away from home and persuades her to enter the easy life of an "allotment wife." Kay, frantic, murders Gertrude. Meanwhile Kelly, in a round-up of the "allotment wives," finds Teala. Kay, learning that Teala was with Kelly, orders her henchmen to recover the girl. Guided by Kay, the gangsters raid Kelly's office and succeed in their mission, but Kay inadvertently leaves behind a clue that reveals her to Kelly as the secret leader. Kelly and the police rush to Kay's home, arriving in time to prevent her from leaving town. In the struggle that ensues, Kay and her henchmen are shot to death.

Harvey N. Gates and William Austin wrote the screen play, Jeffrey Bernard and Miss Francis produced it, and William Nigh directed it. The cast includes Bernard Bedell, Anthony Warde, Selmer Jackson and others.

Not suitable for children.



encouragement would serve to heighten competition among producers, and thus give to the exhibitors, not only better selectivity of pictures, but also a better bargaining position. It is for this reason that this paper is interested in the expansion of independent production.

From what has transpired thus far in the New York anti-trust trial, one is left with the impression that the independent producers are not too badly off under the present set-up of distribution and exhibition. Such an impression, however, is at variance with the views expressed privately by several independent producers, views that should be expressed openly if independent production is to forge ahead in this business.

This paper realizes that some independent producers may not care to express their views lest their standing with the major companies be endangered, but it firmly believes that the only way to dispose of an evil is to give it wide publicity. The time has come for the independent producers to take courage, and to make known the conditions under which they sell their product. If they are content with the present system under which their pictures are distributed, they should, in all fairness to the distributors who handle their product, come out and say so. If, on the other hand, they are not content, if they have grievances, they should, in fairness both to themselves and the independent exhibitors, give expression to their protests. In either case, by breaking their silence, they will benefit the industry as a whole.

HARRISON'S REPORTS will gladly open up its columns to any independent producer who may wish to have his say on the subject.

### **"Danny Boy" with Robert "Buzzy" Henry and "Ace"**

(PRC, December 5; time, 64 min.)

A pleasing program picture, revolving around a young boy's devotion for his dog. It is a simple story, offering nothing in the way of surprises, and it unfolds in a manner one expects, but it contains enough human interest and pathos to put it across with non-critical family audiences. Discriminating patrons, however, may find the proceedings too slow, as well as mawkishly sentimental. The picture should have a particular appeal for children since most of the action centers around a group of young boys. "Ace," the dog, gives an extremely good account of himself as a war-dog who returns to civilian life completely bewildered by the transition. "Buzzy" Henry, as the dog's young master, who, through loving care and patience, helps the animal to adjust himself to a post-war life, is an ingratiating youngster. The melodramatic twists of the plot are not very creditable, but they should make a hit with the kids on Saturday afternoons:—

When his dog, "Danny Boy," returns from the war, "Buzzy" and his Boy Scout troop give him a hero's welcome. "Buzzy," at first dismayed to find the dog apathetic and disinterested, treats him with kindness and succeeds in winning back his affection. Walter Soderling, a grouchy neighbor, takes a dislike to the animal and sets out on a campaign to convince the townspeople that "Danny Boy" was vicious and a menace to the community. Failing, Soderling conspires with an unscrupulous fruit dealer to steal the dog. "Danny Boy," after several days of cruel treatment on the dealer's ranch, frees himself and makes his way back to his distracted young master. Unobjectionable morally.

On the following day, the dog, noticing Soderling and the fruit dealer together, attacks them. Claiming that the attack was without justification, both men prefer charges in Court, with the result that "Danny Boy" is sentenced to death. Ralph Lewis, an ex-Marine and close friend of "Buzzy's," is appointed by the judge to carry out the sentence. Lewis takes the animal out into the woods, and delays as long as possible his painful duty. Meanwhile "Buzzy's" Boy Scout troop had discovered evidence proving that Soderling and the fruit dealer had mistreated the dog. Led by "Buzzy," the boys pedal their bicycles furiously, reaching the woods in time to halt the execution, as well as to witness "Danny Boy's" heroic rescue of a baby in the path of a train. It ends with the arrest of the villains, and with the restoration of the dog to his proud owner.

Raymond L. Schrock wrote the screen play, Leon Fromkess and Martin Mooney produced it, and Terry Morse directed it.

### **"The Strange Mr. Gregory" with Edmund Lowe and Jean Rogers**

(Monogram, no release date set; time, 63 min.)

For exhibitors who cater to audiences that enjoy murder melodramas, this is fairly good program entertainment. Mysticism serves as the background for the story, making the proceedings highly implausible, but since it has been handled competently, and since it offers several novel twists, one's interest is held from start to finish. Some of the situations bring about considerable suspense, particularly in the closing scenes, where the murderer, unmasked, attempts to kill the heroine. Edmund Lowe, as the sinister mystic, makes a suave villain. The manner in which he feigns his own "murder," so that the husband of the woman he loved would be committed to prison for the crime, is intriguing:—

Lowe, a professional magician, experiments in psychic matters and, with the aid of Frank Reicher, his servant, succeeds in putting himself in a death trance. Fascinated by Lowe's feats of magic on the stage, Don Douglas, an amateur magician, and Jean Rogers, his wife, invite him to their home. Lowe falls in love with Jean, but her husband stands in his way. To rid himself of Douglas, Lowe incites his jealousy and, through his ability to put himself in a death trance, makes it appear as if Douglas had murdered him. The death trance fools the authorities, and Douglas is charged with the murder. Several days later, Lowe leaves his crypt and murders his servant to keep him silent. He then assumes the identity of his own "brother," a fictitious personality, which he had been careful to establish before his "murder," and testifies in Douglas' behalf that his "dead brother" was insane. Although Douglas is convicted, Lowe, as the "brother," wins Jean's gratitude and love. But Marjorie Hoshelle, Jean's girl-friend, becomes suspicious of his movements. Together with Jonathan Hale, the defense attorney, she starts a private investigation and, after a series of mystifying events, uncovers evidence of the hoax. They call the police and rush to Jean's home to save her, arriving just as Lowe is about to strangle her. He tries to escape, but a policeman's bullet ends his life.

Charles S. Belden wrote the screen play, Louis Berkoff and Edward Kovacs produced it, and Phil Rosen directed it.



Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

# HARRISON'S REPORTS

**Yearly Subscription Rates:**

United States .....	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions.	16.50
Canada .....	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
Great Britain .....	15.75
Australia, New Zealand,	
India, Europe, Asia ....	17.50
35c a Copy	

**1270 SIXTH AVENUE****Room 1812****New York 20, N. Y.**A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the ExhibitorsIts Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

**A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING****Vol. XXVII****SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1945****No. 46****IN DIVISION THERE'S WEAKNESS**

It took a powerful Hollywood strike to convince the Warner Brothers that they cannot play the 'lone wolf' in the motion picture industry.

When the strike got beyond the control of the authorities, when automobiles were overturned, heads cracked, ribs busted—when it became necessary to use tear gas and firemen's hose to disperse the pickets, it dawned on the Warners that they'll have to play ball with the other studios. The realization of it became more forceful when the strikers' officials, knowing that the Warner Brothers company had withdrawn from the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, now headed by Eric Johnston, singled out its studio for picketing, and demanded damages for those pickets who had been injured in the rioting.

HARRISON'S REPORTS has always admired the Warners for their independent attitude, for it hoped that their rebellious conduct would in some way benefit the independent theatre owners, struggling to make a living; but this strike has proved that, though the independents may benefit in some way from their attitude, they also ran the risk of losing those benefits in other ways, for during the strike, production at the Warner studio suffered, just as it did at the other studios, despite the producers' assertions that production went on uninterruptedly.

The theory that applies to the Warners applies also to the independent exhibitors, leaving out of consideration the Motion Picture Theatre Owners of America, which is purely and simply an organization that is subsidized by the producers, there are regional organizations that are not affiliated with the recognized independent exhibitor organization—Allied States Association, because, either they fear losing their independence of action, or some of the members as well as the officers of such organizations dislike this or that Allied officer, either national or state.

If a sectional exhibitor organization hopes to bring any benefits to its members, it must be part of a larger organization, one of national stature, so that the sectional organization may add its strength to the strength of the organizations that form the larger unit.

HARRISON'S REPORTS recognizes the fact that the Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Exhibitors and a few other organizations are cooperating wholeheartedly with National Allied, and it commends them for their cooperative spirit; but it also believes that, as commendable as is this attitude, it is not sufficient to bring to the members all the benefits they are entitled to. If some of the Allied policies are not, in the opinion of the officers of these units, satisfactory, the place where their opinions should be expressed is

within the ranks of Allied's, and not without. Since Allied States Association is functioning along democratic lines, where the majority opinion prevails, it is unthinkable that any member from within the ranks will fail to convince the other members as well as the organization's officers that a certain policy should be abandoned as being detrimental to the membership. It is only necessary for him to prove the policy wrong to win over the other members.

If in union there is strength, let there be union!

**WILL THE NEW PAC  
BE LIKE THE OLD WAC?**

Members of the present War Activities Committee feel that the idea of the committee should be perpetuated. And so they have set out to perpetuate it by forming a new committee, to be known as the Peace-time Activities Committee.

The functions of the new committee will be to keep a lookout on legislation affecting the interests of the industry adversely, and to consult the Government on matters of reconversion and of disposal of surplus property.

If the function of the new committee will be to be kept informed of where and when is contemplated the introduction of legislation affecting the interests of production and exhibition adversely, HARRISON'S REPORTS says that the idea is well thought out; but when it comes to consulting the Government on reconversion and on the disposition of surplus property, then this paper says that these two matters are altogether outside the knowledge, and the competence, of such a committee, unless they mean the disposal of surplus moving picture property, and not general property.

But before exhibitors will give full endorsement to the idea, they will naturally want to know whether the new committee will be controlled by the producer-distributors, as was the War Activities Committee, or whether the independent exhibitors will be given an equal voice.

Allied States Association should keep an eye on the formation of the new Peace-time Activities Committee, to see to it that the independent exhibitors are given an equal voice in its management and in its activities. The time for Allied to take action is now and not after the committee is formed, for once it is formed, complaints against its activities will be heeded as much as were the complaints against the actions of the members of the War Activities Committee, which is being disbanded. Allied should send inquiries as to the purpose, and the composition, of the new committee so that its proponents may commit themselves in writing now.

### **"They Were Expendable" with Robert Montgomery and John Wayne**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 135 min.)

Based on William L. White's widely-read book of the same title, "They Were Expendable" is a high-rating war melodrama, and a stirring tribute to the valiant officers and crews of the Navy's P-T boats, which played an all-important part in harrasing the Japanese invasions at the start of the war. The production, direction, and acting are first rate. Void of "Hollywood heroics," the story is a cheerless but sincere account of the courageous exploits of a squadron of P-T boats, based in the Philippines. It is a realistic depiction of hardships, discouragements, and sudden death, as the brave crews carry out their assignments against insurmountable odds. The action is particularly thrilling in the scenes that show the boats slipping into Jap-infested, mine-filled harbors to attack and sink enemy warships. The miniature work in these scenes is most impressive. There are many dramatic moments, too, such as the evacuation of General MacArthur and his family from beleaguered Bataan. A pleasant, heart-warming romance between an army nurse and an officer has been worked into the plot. Although the picture deserves top rating as a war drama, the fact remains that the story it tells is dated. Accordingly, this fact, coupled with the fact that many picture-goers have had their fill of war pictures, makes the extent of its box-office possibilities questionable:—

Despite the complacency of their commanding officers, who regarded P-T boats as little more than pleasure crafts, Lieutenants Robert Montgomery and John Wayne maintain their faith in the boats as fighting craft. They are given an opportunity to prove this theory when the Philippines are blockaded after the Pearl Harbor attack. Before long, their courageous raids account for many Jap vessels, and they become a most important factor in the stalling of the Jap invasion. With but four boats remaining of their squadron, Montgomery and Wayne receive their most important assignment—the evacuation of General MacArthur and other high-ranking officers from Bataan. They complete the hazardous journey at the cost of two of their ships, but they succeed in delivering their human cargo to its destination. Their mission completed, Montgomery and Wayne continue their raids on Jap shipping. Eventually, both crews are separated during a desperate encounter, with Wayne losing his ship when it is bombed by a Jap plane, and with Montgomery beaching his ship, which had been crippled. With his few remaining men, Wayne treks through the jungle and succeeds in finding Montgomery. As both leaders prepare to join the fleeing army, they receive orders to board the last plane out of the Philippines, and to return to the United States to train new P-T crews.

Frank Wead, Comdr. U.S.N. (Ret.) wrote the screen play, and John Ford, Captain, U.S.N.R. produced and directed it. Cliff Reid was associate producer. The cast includes Donna Reed, Jack Holt, Ward Bond, Marshall Thompson and many others.

### **"The Daltons Ride Again" with Alan Curtis, Kent Taylor, Noah Beery, Jr. and Lon Chaney**

(Universal, Nov. 23; time, 72 min.)

A fair program Western. Its title may serve to draw patrons who will remember "When the Daltons Rode," which was a highly entertaining action melodrama, produced by Universal in 1940. This one, however, is essentially a picture for the avid followers of Westerns; though it has plentiful action, good horseback riding, and exciting gunplay, it does not offer anything in the way of story or of treatment that is unusual. A routine romance is worked into the plot. The flashback method is employed to tell the story:—

Following the ambush and killings of his notorious brothers by a posse, Alan Curtis, badly wounded, goes on trial for his life. Urged by Martha O'Driscoll, his sweetheart,

to defend himself, Curtis tells the court that he and his brothers (Noah Beery, Jr., Lon Chaney, and Kent Taylor) had been fleeing to Argentina after committing a series of bank robberies. Passing through Skeleton Creek, they had stopped to rest their horses on the ranch of an old friend, who later had been murdered mysteriously. He and his brothers had investigated the murder and had learned that a gang of land-crooks, headed by Thomas Gomez and Walter Sande, had been murdering ranchers and crushing their widows to gain control of their lands. They had taken steps to protect their friend's widow, but Sande, having learned that they were hunted bank robbers, had committed numerous crimes and had placed the blame on them, compelling them to flee. Curtis, having fallen in love with Martha, daughter of John Litel, a militant publisher, had decided to give himself up. The land-crooks, however, had attempted to hang him without a fair trial, and he had been rescued by his brothers, who then had helped him to smash and expose the gang. After surrendering to the sheriff, Curtis had learned that his brothers were on their way to rob a bank in a nearby town, and that a posse was lying in wait for them. He had escaped from jail to warn them, but had arrived too late. The judge sentences Curtis to life imprisonment for his crimes, but leaves him a ray of hope that he will some day be free because of his efforts against the land-crooks.

Roy Chanslor and Paul Gangelin wrote the screen play, Howard Welsch produced it, and Ray Taylor directed it. The cast includes Jess Barker, Milburn Stone and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Too Young to Know" with Joan Leslie and Robert Hutton**

(Warner Bros., Dec. 1; time, 86 min.)

This is no more than a fair domestic drama, of program grade. Due to the moss-covered theme, which has not been accorded any new or unusual twists, and also to the fact that the hero and heroine break up their marriage over a trivial matter, the picture is unable to enlist more than a lukewarm interest in what takes place. Moreover, it is too talky. One sympathizes with the heroine, for she had given the hero no cause for divorce, but it is difficult for one to become interested in the hero, a boorish fellow, who could not control his temper; such a character would do well for a villain but hardly for a hero. It has a few appealing situations and some human interest, but on the whole its dramatic effect is weak because the story lacks sound motivation:—

Joan Leslie, a young girl with a desire for a movie career, and Robert Hutton, a mechanically-minded young man, marry after a whirlwind courtship. A conflict arises between them because of the constant visits paid to their home by Joan's movie-struck friends; Hutton looked upon these friends as a threat to the stability of his marriage. One night, Hutton embarrasses Joan by insulting her friends and by ordering them to leave. They quarrel and, shortly thereafter, are divorced. Three years later, in India, Hutton, now an officer in the air force, meets Dolores Moran, one of Joan's girl-friends, and learns that Joan had given birth to a son shortly after he had left her. He learns also that she had permitted the child to be adopted by another couple immediately after birth. Infuriated by Joan's actions, Hutton obtains a leave of absence and returns to the United States to find his son. He visits Joan and berates her, despite her claim that she was heartbroken at not having the child with her, and that she had permitted the infant's adoption only because of her inability to support him. Since even Joan could not tell him of the identity of the couple who had adopted the infant, Hutton enlists the aid of Harry Davenport, a children's court judge. Davenport, a kindly and understanding man, patiently reconciles the differences between Joan and Hutton, re-marries them, and, as a wedding gift, presents them with their child.

Jo Pagano wrote the screen play, William Jacobs produced it, and Frederick de Cordova directed it. The cast includes Rosemary DeCamp, Arthur Shields and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



### **"What Next, Corporal Hargrove" with Robert Walker and Keenan Wynn**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 95 min.)

This sequel to "See Here, Private Hargrove," is an amusing entertainment; one is kept chuckling from start to finish. This time the locale is France, during the liberation of that country by the Allies, and once again the story concerns itself with the laugh-provoking misadventures of Robert Walker, as the well-meaning "Hargrove," whose troubles for the most part stem from the machinations of Keenan Wynn, as "Mulvehill," his cunning buddy. There are several spots that provoke hearty laughter; as a matter of fact, there is hardly a dull moment, for the players are helped along by the well written dialogue and by the well conceived farcical situations. Since the story deals with the humorous side of army life, and since it contains nothing to remind one of the grim aspects of war, most audiences should find it acceptable:—

Leading a mobile gun crew on the drive through France, Walker loses his way and stumbles into a French village, where he is hailed by the mayor (Hugo Haas) as the town's liberator. Because of his felicitous relations with the townspeople, Walker, together with his buddy, Keenan Wynn, is assigned to cement Allied relations with the village authorities. Walker does a fine job of public relations, but in its handling he becomes uncomfortably involved with the mayor's daughter, Jean Porter, who pursued him. Meanwhile Wynn, seeking to hoodwink the townspeople, is himself taken in by a villager, who sells him a map that purportedly showed where a large quantity of valuable watches were buried in a Paris cellar. In the course of events, Walker and Wynn lose their way while en route to a supply depot, and stumble into Paris by mistake. Their attempt to dig up the non-existent treasure leads to their arrest on charges of being AWOL. Wynn persuades their battery chaplain to intercede for them, telling him a false story about Walker's anxiety to get out of jail to marry the mayor's daughter, who had come to Paris to meet him. Touched by their plight, the chaplain gains their release, but he discovers the hoax on the following day and indignantly orders them back to camp. Walker, tired of Wynn's tricks, breaks with him and returns to camp alone. As the zero hour approaches for the battery to move into action, Walker discovers Wynn missing. Risking court martial, Walker, accompanied by his sergeant (Chill Wills), sneaks back to Paris to find his erstwhile buddy. Together, they find Wynn drunk and disorderly and, after extricating him from a jam with the gendarmes, race back to the battery in the nick of time.

Harry Kurnitz wrote the story and screenplay, George Haight produced it, and Richard Thorpe directed it. Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Sing Your Way Home" with Jack Haley, Marcy McGuire and Anne Jeffreys**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 72 min.)

Despite its thin, unconvincing story, there is enough entertainment in this comedy with music to make it a fair supporting feature. It is one of those pictures in which someone, at the slightest provocation, starts to sing or play music. This is just as well, for the music, which is of the popular variety, is melodious, while the story is hardly worth mentioning. Here and there the comedy sparkles, but for the most part it is ineffective. The picture's theme song, "I'll Buy That Dream," is one of the most popular tunes of the day. "The Lord's Prayer," sung by Donna Lee, is the outstanding musical bit:—

Jack Haley, an egotistic war correspondent, seeking to return to the United States from France, learns that he can obtain passage on a boat only by acting as chaperone to a troupe of teen-aged American entertainers, who, too, were returning home. Haley accepts the assignment grudgingly, and catches Gleen Vernon, one of the youngsters, trying to smuggle Marcy McGuire, his girl-friend, into the troupe. Having been forbidden to send news dispatches over the

ship's radio, Haley, in lieu of reporting Marcy as a stowaway, compels her to send his dispatches in the form of love messages to a mythical sweetheart; his paper, by means of a "love" code, understood the messages. Because of Haley's strict edicts against romancing, the youngsters, to keep him away from them, engineer a romance between him and Anne Jeffreys, a returning singer. Complications set in when Anne, glimpsing one of the "love" messages Marcy had written for Haley, assumes that he was being untrue to her; she jealously adds a sarcastic postscript. Decoded, her postscript meant that the Allies had adopted Haley's world peace plan. Haley's newspaper headlines the amazing story, causing international complications. As a result, Haley is arrested when his boat docks, and he finds himself in the same cell with his furious editor and publisher. Anne, however, learning about the messages from Marcy, explains matters to the State Department and gains Haley's release.

William Bowers wrote the screen play, Bert Granet produced it, and Anthony Mann directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Danger Signal" with Faye Emerson and Zachary Scott**

(Warner Bros., Dec. 15; time, 78 min.)

An interesting program melodrama, with psychological overtones, well directed and acted. It deals with the machinations of a suave murderer, who charms his way into the home and hearts of two sisters, switching his attentions from one to the other because of her money. Though slow-moving, the action is charged with considerable suspense. One's interest is aroused right at the start, and is heightened as the story unfolds, reaching a climax in which the villain, to escape justice, accidentally plunges over a steep cliff to his death. This climax, however, is so abrupt and so unexpected that it loses its dramatic punch. Zachary Scott, as the smooth-talking villain, is properly despicable. The production values are modest, but the background music is very effective:—

Implicated in the death of another man's wife, Scott escapes to a distant city, where, posing as a returned veteran, he obtains a room in the home of Faye Emerson, a public stenographer, whose constant efforts to earn enough money to support her mother (Mary Servoss) and her sixteen-year-old sister (Mona Freeman) left her no time for a social life. Faye, easily charmed by Scott's engaging manner, falls in love with him, while he pretends to return her love. Shortly afterwards, Mona returns home from a sanatorium and, despite her knowledge that Faye and Scott were virtually engaged, becomes infatuated with him. Scott, learning that Mona was to inherit \$25,000, transfers his affections and sweeps her off her feet. Faye discovering his duplicity, and seeking to save Mona from him, determines to kill him. While typing some papers in the laboratory of Bruce Bennett, a shy scientist who loved her but lacked the fortitude to tell her, Faye steals a vial of poison. Through a ruse, she attracts Scott to the beach home of a friend (Rosemary DeCamp), with whom he had started a flirtation. His suspicions are quickly dispelled when Faye tells him that she wanted to be alone with him in an attempt to win him back from Mona. Although she cannot bring herself to poison him, Faye, after dining with him, tortures him by leading him to believe that he had been poisoned. She makes him beg for his life before admitting the ruse. Enraged, he rushes from the beach house only to find himself confronted by the husband of the woman he had slain. In his haste to evade the man, Scott stumbles over a steep cliff to his death. Their lives back to normal, Faye responds to the invigorated attentions of Bennett, while Mona seeks out a boy her own age.

Adele Commandini and Graham Baker wrote the screen play, William Jacobs produced it, and Robert Florey directed it. The cast includes Dick Egan, John Ridgely and others.

Not suitable for children.



## A RESOLUTION REGARDING COLLECTIONS IN THEATRES

Mr. Don R. Rossiter, executive secretary of the Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana, an Allied affiliate, has sent this office the following resolution:

"WHEREAS, the Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana, Inc., in Nineteenth Annual Convention assembled at the Indianapolis Athletic Club on Tuesday, November 6, 1945, has received a recommendation from its Board of Directors that the practice of taking collections in theatres be abandoned; and

"WHEREAS, this Convention recognizes that the war emergency which brought about the practice has passed; and

"WHEREAS, it is further recognized that it is the obligation of theatres to supply entertainment for paid admissions and not to embarrass their patrons by asking for contributions to charitable enterprises; and

"WHEREAS, this Convention likewise recognizes the obligation of all motion picture theatre owners to use the medium of their screens in publicizing all worthy causes to promote the public welfare;

"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Convention recommends to the members of the Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana, Inc., and all other independent theatre owners, that the practice of taking collections in theatres when their patrons are trapped in their seats, be abandoned, and that their screens be used to support all proper movements for the good of the people;

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of this Association are opposed to the War Activities Committee of the Motion Picture Industry or any other group pledging our theatres for fund raising purposes without our consent."

### "My Name is Julia Ross" with Nina Foch, Dame Mae Whitty and George Macready

(Columbia, November 27; time, 65 min.)

A pretty good psychological program melodrama. An ominous mood is sustained throughout as one follows the fate of the terrified heroine, who had suddenly discovered that her new employer was trying to drive her insane as part of a diabolical plot to cover up a murder. Suspense is brought about by the heroine's many thwarted attempts to either escape her imprisonment or make known her plight to different persons who unwittingly believed that she was mentally unbalanced. Its action is slow-paced, and at times it falls short of generating the excitement intended, but on the whole the story is intriguing from beginning to end:—

Desperately in need of a job, Nina Foch finds employment as secretary to Dame Mae Whitty, a wealthy English matron, and George Macready, her son, who insist that she must reside with them. Nina hurries to her rooming house to pack and to inform Roland Varno, her boy-friend, of her good fortune. Arriving at Miss Whitty's London home, Nina is shown to her room. She awakens two days later to find that she had been moved to a lonely mansion on the seacoast of Cornwall, and that she had been drugged. The family and servants treat her kindly, but refer to her as "Marion," Macready's wife, and insist that she had just come from a mental institution, after a nervous breakdown. Aware that Macready and his mother were trying to drive her insane, Nina investigates and learns that Macready, in a fit

of temper, had murdered his wife, and that he and his mother, by representing her as the dead woman, and by plotting to kill her in a manner that would indicate suicide, hoped to cover up evidence of Macready's crime. Macready and his mother foil Nina's every attempt to escape and to make known the truth, but she manages to outwit them by mailing a note to her boy-friend. Through a hoax, Nina leads Macready to believe that she had committed suicide and, in the excitement, escapes from the mansion. Macready, however, discovers the trick and prepares to kill her, but she is saved by the timely arrival of her boy-friend and the police.

Muriel Roy Bolton wrote the screen play from Anthony Gilbert's novel, "The Woman in Red." Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Joseph H. Lewis directed it. The cast includes Anita Bolster, Doris Lloyd and others.

Not suitable for children.

### "Strange Confession" with Lon Chaney, J. Carroll Naish and Brenda Joyce

(Universal, October 5; time, 62 min.)

This murder melodrama does not rate as anything higher than ordinary program fare. Since the picture is being billed as an "Inner Sanctum Mystery," this may help to attract patrons, but there is nothing mysterious about the proceedings; the spectator is aware at all times of what is going on. The story is, in fact, an unconvincing mixture of melodrama and domestic tragedy, slow in action and lacking in suspense. The one redeeming feature is the performances of the players, but even their efforts are insufficient to hold one's interest throughout:—

Lon Chaney, a brilliant young chemist, who believed in working for the good of mankind, brings to his attorney a bag containing the head of his former employer (J. Carroll Naish), and relates to him the story of why he had killed the man. Stating that Naish had been a profit-mad manufacturer of drugs, Chaney relates that he had resigned from his employ upon discovering that his uncompleted experiments on new drugs were being marketed to the public in a fraudulent manner. After several months in a low-paying job, Chaney, out of regard for his wife and child (Brenda Joyce and Gregory Muradian), had accepted Naish's offer of re-employment on the promise that his experimental drugs would not be exploited until proved. Naish had stolen Chaney's uncompleted notes on a experimental drug for the cure of influenza, and, in order to market the drug, as well as to have an opportunity to be attentive to Chaney's wife, he had sent Chaney to South America to complete his experiments on the influenza cure. While Chaney had been away, his child had become a victim of an influenza epidemic, and his wife, believing that the marketed drug had been perfected, had administered it to the child, who had died. Meanwhile Chaney, concerned about the child, had returned unexpectedly from South America. Grieving over his son's death, and learning that the faulty drug had failed to save him, he had, in retaliation, decapitated Naish. Chaney's attorney, having called the police to arrest his client, promises to defend him in court.

M. Coates Webster wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and John Hoffman directed it. The cast includes Milburn Stone, Lloyd Bridges and others.

Not suitable for children.



## HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXVII

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1945

No. 46

(Partial Index No. 6—Pages 158 to 180 Incl.)

## Titles of Pictures

## Reviewed on Page

Allotment Wives—Monogram (80 min.)	179
Bad Men of the Border—Universal (56 min.)	not reviewed
Border Badman—PRC (59 min.)	not reviewed
Club Havana—PRC (62 min.)	167
Code of the Lawless—Universal (56 min.)	not reviewed
Confidential Agent—Warner Bros. (118 min.)	174
Crime Doctor's Warning, The—Columbia (70 min.)	162
Crimson Canary—Universal (64 min.)	175
Dakota—Republic (82 min.)	178
Danny Boy—PRC (64 min.)	180
Detour—PRC (68 min.)	179
Don't Fence Me In—Republic (71 min.)	not reviewed
Fallen Angel—20th Century-Fox (97 min.)	170
Fifth Chair, The—United Artists (see "It's in the Bag")	23
Frontier Feud—Monogram (54 min.)	not reviewed
Girls of the Big House—Republic (68 min.)	179
Hold That Blonde—Paramount (77 min.)	158
How Do You Do—PRC (80 min.)	178
Kitty—Paramount (92 min.)	163
Lost Trail, The—Monogram (58 min.)	not reviewed
People Are Funny—Paramount (92 min.)	163
Prairie Rustlers—PRC (58 min.)	not reviewed
Pursuit to Algiers—Universal (65 min.)	170
Riders of the Dawn—Monogram (58 min.)	not reviewed
Rough Riders of Cheyenne—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
Scotland Yard Investigator—Republic (68 min.)	166
Senorita from the West—Universal (63 min.)	166
Sensation Hunters—Monogram (63 min.)	162
Shadow of Terror—PRC (63 min.)	158
She Went to the Races—MGM (86 min.)	166
She Wouldn't Say Yes—Columbia (86 min.)	178
Song of the Prairie—Columbia (69 min.)	not reviewed
South of the Rio Grande—Monogram (62m.)	not reviewed
Spanish Main, The—RKO (101 min.)	158
Spellbound—United Artists (110 min.)	175
Spider, The—20th Century-Fox (61 min.)	162
Strange Mr. Gregory, The—Monogram (63 min.)	180
Stork Club, The—Paramount (98 min.)	159
Sunbonnet Sue—Monogram (90 min.)	160
This Love of Ours—Universal (90 min.)	170
Tiger Woman—Republic (57 min.)	174
Trail to Vengeance—Universal (54 min.)	not reviewed
Voice of the Whistler—Columbia (60 min.)	174
Wanderer of the Wasteland—RKO (67 min.)	160
Yolanda and the Thief—MGM (108 min.)	167

## RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

## Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

6020 The Gay Senorita—Falkenburg-Bannon	Aug. 9
6208 Rustlers of the Badlands—Starrett (58m.)	Aug. 16
6001 Over 21—Dunne-Knox	Aug. 23
6027 Adventures of Rusty—Donaldson-Nagel	Sept. 6
6015 I Love a Bandleader—Harris—"Rochester"	Sept. 13
6209 Outlaws of the Rockies—Starrett (55 min.)	Sept. 19
Song of the Prairie—Western musical (69m)	Sept. 27
She Wouldn't Say Yes—Russell-Bowman	Nov.
Specials	
A Song to Remember—Muni-Oberon	Mar. 1
Kiss and Tell—Temple-Abel	Oct. 18
(End of 1944-45 Season)	

## Beginning of 1945-46 Season

7022 Crime Doctor's Warning—Warner Baxter	Sept. 27
7029 Girl of the Limberlost—Nelson-Clifton	Oct. 11
7201 Blazing the Western Trail—Starrett (55 m.)	Oct. 18
7024 Voice of the Whistler—Dix-Merrick	Oct. 30
Prison Ship—Lowery-Foch	Nov. 15
Lawless Empire—Charles Starrett	Nov. 15
Snafu—Parks-Lloyd	Nov. 22
7023 My Name is Julia Ross—Foch-Macready	Nov. 27
Hit the Hay—Canova-Hunter	Nov. 29
Life with Blondie—Singleton-Lake	Dec. 13
One Way to Love—Carter-Morris	Dec. 20
Texas Panhandle—Starrett	Dec. 20
Strange Voyage—Bannon-Hunter	Dec. 27

## Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

## Block 12

528 Thrill of a Romance—Johnson-Williams	July
529 Twice Blessed—Lee and Lynn Wilde	July
530 Bewitched—Thaxter-Gwenn	July

## Specials

500 Dragon Seed—Hepburn-Huston	Aug. '44
511 Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo—Tracy-Johnson	January
512 Meet Me in St. Louis—Garland-O'Brien	January
521 National Velvet—Rooney-Taylor	April
527 Valley of Decision—Garson-Peck	June
531 Anchors Aweigh—Kelly-Sinatra-Grayson	Aug. '45
(End of 1944-45 Season)	

## Beginning of 1945-46 Season

## Block 13

600 Our Vines Have Tender Grapes— Robinson-O'Brien	Sept.
601 The Hidden Eye—Edward Arnold	Sept.
602 Abbott & Costello in Hollywood	Oct.
603 Her Highness & the Bellboy—Lamar-Walker	Oct.
604 Dangerous Partners—Craig-Hasso	Oct.

## Block 14

606 What Next, Corporal Hargrove?— Walker-Wynn	Not set
607 She Went to the Races—Craig-Gifford	Not set
608 Vacation from Marriage—Donat-Kerr	Not set
609 A Letter for Evie—Hunt-Carroll	Not set
610 Yolanda and the Thief—Astaire-Bremer	Not set

## Specials

605 Weekend at the Waldorf—All star	Oct.
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## Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

462 Springtime in Texas—Wakely (57 m.)	June 2
424 Trouble Chasers—Howard-Gilbert	June 2
451 Flame of the West—Brown-Woodbury (70m.)	June 9
411 Muggs Rides Again—East Side Kids	June 16
405 China's Little Devils—Carey-Kelly	July 14
456 Stranger from Santa Fe—J. M. Brown (53 m.)	Aug. 4
463 Saddle Serenade—Wakely (56 m.)	Aug. 11
404 Divorce—Francis-Cabot	Aug. 18
431 South of the Rio Grande—Renaldo (62 m.) (re.)	Sept. 15
412 Come Out Fighting—East Side Kids (reset)	Sept. 22
415 The Shanghai Cobra—Sidney Toler (reset)	Sept. 29
407 Sensation Hunters—Lowery-Merrick	Oct. 13
457 The Lost Trail—J. M. Brown (58 m.) (re.)	Oct. 20
464 Riders of the Dawn—Jimmy Wakely (58 m.)	Nov. 3
458 Frontier Feud—J. M. Brown (54 m.)	Nov. 24
452 Drifting Along—J. M. Brown	Dec. 29
(More to come)	

## Beginning of 1945-46 Season

561 Lonesome Trail—Jimmy Wakely	Dec. 8
505 Allotment Wives—Francis-Kelly	Dec. 24

**Paramount Features**

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

**Block 6**

- 4426 Out of this World—Bracken-Lynn.....July 13  
 4427 Midnight Manhunt—Gargan-Savage  
 (formerly "One Exciting Night") .....July 27  
 4428 You Came Along—Scott-Cummings .....Sept. 14  
 Special

- 4431 Incendiary Blonde—Hutton-De Cordova...Aug. 31  
 Reissues

- 4432 Sign of the Cross—Colbert-March.. No nat'l rel. date  
 4433 Northwest Mounted Police—Cooper-Carroll..Aug. 26  
 4434 This Gun for Hire—Ladd-Lake.....Aug. 26  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season****Block 1**

- 4501 Duffy's Tavern—Ed Gardner .....Sept. 28  
 4504 Love Letters—Jones-Cotton .....Oct. 26  
 4503 The Lost Weekend—Milland-Wyman ....Nov. 16  
 4502 Follow That Woman—Gargan-Kelly .....Dec. 14

**Block 2**

- 4506 Hold That Blonde—Bracken-Lake .....Nov. 23  
 4507 Stork Club—Hutton-Fitzgerald .....Dec. 28  
 4508 People are Funny—Haley-Langford .....Jan. 11  
 4509 Kitty—Milland-Goddard .....Jan. 25

**Block 3**

- 4513 Miss Susie Slagle's—Lake-Tufts .....Feb. 8  
 4512 Masquerade in Mexico—Lamour-DeCordova Feb. 22  
 4511 Tokyo Rose—Barr-Massen .....Mar. 8  
 4514 Road to Utopia—Crosby-Hope .....Mar. 22

**PRC Pictures, Inc. Features**

(625 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

- 566 Stagecoach Outlaws—Buster Crabbe (58m.)..Aug. 17  
 519 Dangerous Intruder—Arnt-Borg (re.).....Aug. 21  
 526 Apology for Murder—Savage-Beaumont (re.) Aug. 27  
 563 Frontier Fugitives—Texas Rangers (55 m.)...Sept. 1  
 528 Arson Squad—Albertson-Armstrong .....Sept. 11  
 567 Border Badman—Buster Crabbe (59 m.)....Oct. 10  
 564 Flaming Bullets—Texas Rangers (61 m.)....Oct. 15  
 568 Fighting Bill Carson—Buster Crabbe (55m.)..Oct. 31  
 525 Shadow of Terror—Fraser-Gillhorn (re.)...Nov. 5  
 111 White Pongo—Fraser-Wrixon .....Not set  
 222 Why Girls Leave Home—Blake-Leonard....Not set  
 (More to come)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 651 Prairie Rustlers—Buster Crabbe (58 m.)....Nov. 7  
 Song of Old Wyoming—Dean-Holt 67 m.)...Nov. 12  
 The Navajo Kid—Bob Steele.....Nov. 21  
 Enchanted Forest—Lowe-Joyce .....Dec. 8  
 Club Havana—Neal Lindsay.....Nov. 23  
 Detour—Neal Savage .....Nov. 30  
 Danny Boy—Robert "Buzzy" Henry.....Dec. 5  
 How Do You Do?—Bert Gordon.....Dec. 17  
 The Flying Serpent—Zucco-Kramer.....Dec. 26  
 Strangler of the Swamp—LaPlanche-Barrat...Jan. 1

**Republic Features**

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

- 443 Man from Oklahoma—Roy Rogers (68 min.)..Aug. 1  
 425 Tell It to a Star—Livingston-Terry .....Aug. 16  
 426 Swingin' on a Rainbow—Frazee-Taylor .....Sept. 1  
 429 Behind City Lights—Roberts-Cookson .....Sept. 10  
 427 The Fatal Witness—Ankers-Fraser .....Sept. 15  
 428 Love, Honor and Goodbye—Bruce-McLaglen Sept. 15  
 444 Sunset in Eldorado—Roy Rogers (65 min.)..Sept. 29  
 445 Don't Fence Me In—Roy Rogers (71 min.) ..Oct. 20  
 430 The Tiger Woman—Richmond-Grey .....Nov. 16  
 431 Mexicana—Guizar-Moore .....Not set  
 (More to Come)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 561 Phantom of the Plains—Bill Elliott (55m.) ..Sept. 7  
 551 Bandits of the Badlands—  
 Sunset Carson (56 min.) .....Sept. 14  
 501 Scotland Yard Investigator—Smith-  
 Von Stroheim .....Sept. 30  
 562 Marshal of Laredo—Bill Elliott (56 min.) ..Oct. 7  
 552 Rough Riders of Cheyenne—Sunset Carson  
 (56 min.) .....Nov. 1

- 502 Girls of the Big House—Roberts-Powers ....Nov. 2  
 563 Colorado Pioneers—Bill Elliott .....Nov. 14  
 504 Captain Tugboat Annie—Darwell-Kennedy ..Nov. 17  
 503 An Angel Comes to Brooklyn—Dowd-Duke .Nov. 27

**RKO Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

**Block 1**

- 601 Mama Loves Papa—Leon Errol .....  
 602 George White's Scandals—Haley-Davis .....  
 603 The Falcon in San Francisco—Tom Conway .....  
 604 Johnny Angel—Raft-Trevor-Hasso .....  
 605 Radio Stars on Parade—Carney-Brown .....

**Block 2**

- 606 Man Alive—O'Brien-Drew-Menjou .....  
 607 First Yank Into Tokyo—Neal-Hale .....  
 608 Isle of the Dead—Karloff-Drew .....  
 609 Wanderer of the Wasteland—Warren-Long .....  
 610 The Spanish Main—Henreid-O'Hara .....

**Block 3**

- Cornered—Dick Powell .....  
 Dick Tracy—Conway-Jeffreys .....  
 Hotel Reserve—English cast .....  
 Sing Your Way Home—Haley-Jeffreys .....  
 The Spiral Staircase—Brent-McGuire.....  
 Specials

- 681 Along Came Jones—Cooper-Young .....  
 651 Wonder Man—Danny Kaye .....  
 691 Wonderful Adventures of Pinocchio—(reissue) .....

**Twentieth Century-Fox Features**

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

- 601 A Bell for Adano—Hodiak-Tierney.....Aug.  
 603 Junior Miss—Garner-Joslyn .....Aug.  
 606 The Way Ahead—David Niven .....Aug.  
 604 Captain Eddie—MacMurray-Bari .....Sept.  
 605 Caribbean Mystery—Dunn-Ryan .....Sept.  
 607 State Fair—Haymes-Crain .....Oct.  
 608 The House on 92nd St.—Eythe-Hasso .....Oct.  
 609 The Dolly Sisters—Grable-Haver .....Nov.  
 611 And Then There Were None—  
 Fitzgerald-Huston .....Nov.  
 613 The Spider—Conte-Marlowe .....Dec.  
 612 Fallen Angel—Faye-Andrews .....Dec.  
 610 Col. Effingham's Raid—Coburn-Bennett ....Not set  
 Special

- 602 Wilson—Knox-Fitzgerald .....Aug.

**United Artists Features**

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- The Southerner—Scott-Field (formerly "Hold  
 Autumn in Your Hand") .....Aug. 10  
 Paris-Underground—Bennett-Fields .....Oct. 6  
 Captain Kidd—Laughton-Scott .....Oct. 19  
 Getting Gertie's Garter—O'Keefe-McDonald ....Nov. 30  
 Blithe Spirit—English cast .....Dec. 14  
 Spellbound—Bergman-Peck .....Dec. 28  
 Abilene Town—Scott-Dvorak .....Jan. 11  
 Whistle Stop—Raft-Gardner .....Jan. 25  
 The Outlaw—Russell-Buetell .....Feb. 8  
 Johnny in the Clouds—English Cast .....Feb. 15

**Universal Features**

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

- 9045 Easy to Look At—Jean-Grant .....Aug. 10  
 9075 Strange Affair of Uncle Harry—  
 Sanders-Raines-Fitzgerald (reset) .....Aug. 17  
 9001 Lady on a Train—Deanna Durbin (reset) ..Aug. 24  
 Reissues  
 9096 Imitation of Life—Claudette Colbert .....June 15  
 9097 East Side of Heaven—Bing Crosby .....June 15  
 (End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

- 501 Shady Lady—Paige-Simms .....Sept. 7  
 502 Men in Her Diary—Hall-Allbritton.....Sept. 14  
 503 River Gang—Jean-Quallen .....Sept. 21  
 1101 Bad Men of the Border—Grant-Knight  
 (56 min.) .....Sept. 28



- 504 That Night With You—Tone-Foster .....Sept. 28  
 505 Strange Confession—Chaney-Joyce .....Oct. 5  
 506 Senorita from the West—Jones-Granville....Oct. 12  
 1102 Code of the Lawless—Grant-Knight (54m)Oct. 19  
 507 Pursuit to Algiers—Rathbone-Bruce .....Oct. 26  
 508 This Love of Ours—Oberon-Rains  
     (reset) .....Nov. 2  
 509 Crimson Canary—Beery, Jr.-Collier .....Nov. 9  
 510 The Daltons Ride Again—Curtis-Taylor (re.)Nov. 23  
 1103 Trail to Vengeance—Grant-Knight (54m)Nov. 30  
 511 House of Dracula—Chaney-Atwill .....Dec. 7  
 512 Pillow of Death—Chaney-Joyce .....Dec. 14  
 514 Scarlet Street—Robinson-Bennett .....Dec. 28  
 1104 Gun Town—Grant-Knight .....Jan. 18  
 (Ed. Note: "That Night in Paradise," listed in the previous index as a Nov. 2 release, has been withdrawn.)

### Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

- 501 Pride of the Marines—Garfield-Parker .....Sept. 1  
 502 Rhapsody in Blue—Alda-Leslie .....Sept. 22  
 503 It All Came True—Bogart-Sheridan (reissue)  
     (97 min.) .....Oct. 6  
 504 Born for Trouble—Johnson-Emerson (reissue)  
     (57 min.) (formerly titled "Murder in the  
     Big House") .....Oct. 6  
 505 Mildred Pierce—Crawford-Carson-Scott .....Oct. 20  
 506 Confidential Agent—Boyer-Bacall .....Nov. 10  
 507 Too Young to Know—Leslie-Hutton .....Dec. 1  
 508 Danger Signal—Emerson-Scott .....Dec. 15  
     San Antonio—Errol Flynn (re.) .....Dec. 29

### SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

#### Columbia—One Reel

- 6504 Hot Foot Light—Color Rhap. (7m.) .....Aug. 2  
 6809 Chips and Putts—Sports (9m.) .....Aug. 10  
 6662 Community Sings No. 12 (10m.) .....Aug. 23  
 6754 Treasure Jest—Fox & Crow (6½m.) .....Aug. 30  
 6810 Salmon Fishing—Sports (9m.) .....Sept. 2  
 6505 Carnival Courage—Col. Rhap. (7m.) .....Sept. 6  
     (End of 1944-45 Season)

#### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- 7951 Milt Britton & Band—Film Vodvil (11 m.) Aug. 30  
 7851 Screen Snapshots No. 1 (9 m.) .....Sept. 7  
 7651 Community Sings No. 1 (9½ m.) .....Sept. 20  
 7801 Champion of the Cue—Sports (7½ m.) ...Sept. 27  
 7852 Screen Snapshots No. 2 (10 min.) .....Oct. 11  
 7652 Community Sings No. 2 (10 m.) .....Oct. 18  
 7701 Simple Siren—Phantasy (reset) (6½ min.) Oct. 25  
 7802 Puck Chasers—Sports (10 min.) .....Oct. 25  
 7952 Randy Brooks Orchestra—Film Vodvil  
     (10½ min.) .....Oct. 30  
 7751 Phoney Baloney—Fox & Crow (7 m.) (re.) Nov. 1  
 7901 The Magic Stone—Panoramic (10 m.) .....Nov. 8  
 7853 Screen Snapshots No. 3 (9 min.) .....Nov. 15  
 7803 Cadet Cagers—Sports (8½ min.) .....Nov. 22  
 7653 Community Sings No. 3 (10 min.) .....Nov. 29  
 7854 Screen Snapshots No. 4 .....Dec. 13  
 7953 Morale's Copacabana Orch.—Film Vodvil ..Dec. 13  
 7601 Catnipped—Flippy (7½ min.) (reset) ....Dec. 13  
 7804 Mermaids' Paradise—Sports .....Dec. 20  
 7654 Community Sings No. 4 .....Dec. 20  
 7501 Rivver Ribber—Col. Rhap. (8 min.) (reset) Dec. 20

#### Columbia—Two Reels

- 7401 If a Body Meets a Body—Stooges (18 m.) .Aug. 30  
 7409 Vine, Women & Song—Musical Gaiety  
     (22½ m.) (re.) .....Sept. 6  
 7120 Jungle Raiders—Serial (15 ep.) (reset) ..Sept. 14  
 7421 The Mayor's Husband—Hugh Herbert  
     (16 m.) .....Sept. 20  
 7431 Where the Fest Begins—S. Howard (17 m.) Oct. 4  
 7422 Dance, Dunc, Dance—Eddie Foy, Jr.  
     (18½ m.) .....Oct. 18  
 7432 A Miner Affair—A. Clyde (19 min.) .....Nov. 1  
 7402 Micro-Phonies—3 Stooges (17 min.) .....Nov. 15  
 7423 Calling All Fibbers—V. Vague (16½ min.) Nov. 29  
 7433 High Blood Pressure—Schilling-Lane (19 m.)Dec. 6  
 7434 A Hit with a Miss—S. Howard (16 min.) ...Dec. 13  
 7140 Who's Guilty?—Serial (15 episodes) .....Dec. 13  
 7435 Spook to Me—A. Clyde (17 min.) .....Dec. 27

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- T-613 Modern Guatemala City—Traveltalk (9m.)Aug. 25  
     (End of Season)

#### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- S-751 Football Thrills of 1944—Pete Smith (8m.)Sept. 8  
 T-711 Where Time Stands Still—Traveltalk (9m.)Sept. 22  
 W-731 Flirty Birdy—Cartoon (7 m.) .....Sept. 22  
 M-781 Strange Destiny—Miniature (10 m.) ...Sept. 29  
 K-771 The Great American Mug—Pass. Par. (10m.)Oct. 6  
 S-752 Guest Pests—Pete Smith (9 m.) .....Oct. 20  
 M-782 Spreadin the Jam—Miniature (10 m.) ..Oct. 27  
 K-772 Stairway to Light—Passing Parade (10 m.) Nov. 10  
 K-773 People on Paper—Pas. Par. (10 min.) ....Nov. 17  
 S-753 Bus Pests—Pete Smith (9 min.) .....Dec. 1  
 S-756 Badminton—Pete Smith (10 min.) .....Dec. 8  
 K-774 The Golden Hunch—Pas. Par. (10 min.) Dec. 15  
 S-754 Sports Sticklers—Pete Smith (10 min.) ...Jan. 5  
 K-775 Magic on a Stick—Pas. Par. (9 min.) .....Jan. 19  
 S-755 Gettin' Glamour—Pete Smith (7 min.) ....Feb. 2

### Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-701 A Gun in His Hand—Special (19 m.) ...Sept. 15  
 A-702 Purity Squad—Special (20 m.) .....Nov. 3

### Republic—Two Reels

- 483 Federal Operator 99 (12 episodes) Lamont-  
     Talbot .....July 7  
 484 Purple Monster Strikes—Morgan-Stirling  
     (15 episodes) .....Sept. 29  
     (End of 1944-45 Season)

### RKO—One Reel

- 53313 Colorado Rainbows—Sportscope (8 m.) ..Aug. 10  
 54114 Duck Pimples—Disney (7½ m.) .....Aug. 10  
 54115 The Legend of Coyote Rock—Disney(7m.)Aug. 24  
 54116 No Sail—Disney (7 m.) .....Sept. 7  
 54117 Hockey Homicide—Disney (8 m.) .....Sept. 21  
     (More to Come)

#### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- 64301 Athletic Items—Sportscope (8 m.) .....Sept. 7  
 64201 Flicker Flashbacks No. 1 (7½ min.) ....Sept. 14  
 64302 Battling Bass—Sportscope (8 min.) .....Oct. 5  
 64101 Canine Patrol—Disney (7 min.) .....Oct. 26  
 671 The House I Live In—Sinatra (10 min.) ..Nov. 9

### RKO—Two Reels

- 53706 Double Honeymoon—Leon Errol (18 m.) Aug. 3  
 53405 It's Your Move—Edgar Kennedy (17 m.) Aug. 10  
 53111 Annapolis—This is America (16 m.) ....Aug. 24  
 53406 You Drive Me Crazy—Edgar Kennedy  
     (17 m.) .....Sept. 7  
 53112 California Boom Town—This is America  
     (16 m.) .....Sept. 21  
 53113 Americans in Paris—This is Amer. (16m.)Oct. 19  
     (End of 1944-45 Season)

#### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- 63501 A Western Welcome—Western Musical  
     (18 m.) (reissue) .....Sept. 7  
 63701 Beware of Redheads—Leon Errol (17 m.) Sept. 14  
 63201 The Derby Decade—Headliner Revivals  
     (22 m.) .....Sept. 21  
 63401 The Big Beef—Edgar Kennedy (17 m.) ...Oct. 19  
 63502 Sagebrush Serenade—Western Musical (re.)Oct. 26

### Paramount—One Reel

- U4-7 Jasper's Booby Traps—Puppetoon (8 m.)..Aug. 3  
 J4-6 Popular Science No. 6 (10 m.) .....Aug. 10  
 E4-6 Mess Production—Popeye (6 m.) .....Aug. 24  
 R4-10 Campus Mermaids—Spotlight (8m.) ...Sept. 7  
 L4-6 Unusual Occupations No. 6 (10m.) .....Sept. 14  
 Y4-6 From A to Zoo—Speak. of Animals (9m.) Sept. 21  
 U4-8 Jasper's Close Shave—Puppetoon (8m.)...Sept. 28  
     (End of 1944-45 Season)

#### Beginning of 1945-46 Season

- R5-1 What a Picnic—Spotlight (9 m.) .....Oct. 5  
 J5-1 Popular Science No. 1 (10 m.) .....Oct. 12  
 U5-1 Jasper & the Beanstalk—Puppetoon (8 m.)Oct. 19  
 R5-2 Paddle Your Own—Spotlight (9 m.) ....Nov. 9  
 Y5-1 Animal-ology—Speak. of Animals (9 m.) Nov. 23  
 U5-2 My Man Jasper—Puppetoon (7 m.) .....Dec. 14

**Paramount—Two Reels**

FF4-6 You Hit the Spot—Musical Parade (17 m.) .Aug. 17  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

FF5-1 Little Witch—Musical Parade (17 m.) ...Oct. 26  
FF5-2 Naughty Nannette—Musical Parade .....Dec. 28

**Universal—One Reel**

9357 Victory Bound—Var. Views (9m.) .....Aug. 6  
9317 School for Mermaids—Per. Odd. (9m.) ....Aug. 13  
9358 Village of the Past—Var. Views (9m.) ....Aug. 20  
9378 Kanine Aristocrats—Per. Odd. (9m.) .....Aug. 27  
9240 Dippy Diplomats—Cartune (7m.) .....Aug. 27  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

1361 Gabriel Heatter Reporting—Per. Odd. (9m.) Sept. 10  
1341 Queer Birds—Var. Views (9 m.) .....Sept. 17  
1362 Hillbilly Artist—Per. Odd. (9 m.) .....Sept. 24  
1342 Go North—Var. Views (9 m.) .....Oct. 1  
1363 Paper Magic—Per. Odd. (9 m.) .....Oct. 15  
1343 Grave Laughter—Var. Views (9 m.) .....Oct. 22  
1364 Pottery Poet—Per. Od. (9 m.) .....Oct. 29  
1344 Doctor of Paintings—Var. Views (9 m.) ...Nov. 5  
1365 Front Line Artist—Per. Odd. (9 m.) .....Nov. 12  
1321 The Loose Nut—Cartune (7 m.) .....Dec. 17

**Universal—Two Reels**

9129 Waikiki Melody—Musical (15 m.) .....Aug. 29  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

1581-1593 Secret Agent X-9—Serial (13 ep.) ...July 24  
1681-1693 The Royal Mounted Rides Again—Serial  
(13 episodes) .....Oct. 23  
1301 Solid Senders—Jan Garber—Musical (15m.) Nov. 21  
1302 Hot & Hectic—Tommy Tucker—  
Musical (15 m.) .....Nov. 28  
1303 Synco-Smooth Swing—Ted Fio Rita  
—Musical (15 m.) .....Dec. 19

**Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel**

6501 Mighty Mouse in Gypsy Life—Terry. (6m.) .Aug. 3  
6501 Memories of Columbus—Adventure (8 m.) Aug. 17  
6502 Aesop's Fable—The Fox & the Duck—Terry  
(7 m.) .....Aug. 24  
6252 Magic of Youth—Adventure (7 m.) .....Aug. 31  
6503 Swooning the Swooners—Terrytoon (7m.) .Sept. 14  
6351 Ski Aces—Sports (7 m.) .....Sept. 21  
6504 Aesop's Fable—The Watch Dog—Terry  
(7 m.) .....Sept. 28  
6253 China Carries On—Adventure (8 m.) ....Oct. 12  
6505 Who's Who in the Jungle—Gandy Goose—  
Terrytoon .....Oct. 19  
6254 Bountiful Alaska—Adventure (8 m.) ....Oct. 26  
6506 Mighty Mouse Meets Bad Bill Bunion—  
Terrytoon .....Nov. 9  
6352 Time Out for Play—Sports .....Nov. 16  
6255 Song of Sunshine—Adventure (9 m.) .....Dec. 7  
6256 Louisiana Springtime—Adventure (8 m.) ..Dec. 21

**Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels**

Vol. 12 No. 1—Palestine Problem—  
March of Time .....Sept. 7  
Vol. 12 No. 2—American Beauty—  
March of Time—(18 m.) .....Oct. 5  
Vol. 12 No. 3—18 Million Orphans  
March of Time (17 m.) .....Nov. 2

**Vitaphone—One Reel**

1310 I'm a Little Big Shot Now—Hit. Par. (7 m.) .Aug. 4  
1724 Hare Conditioned—Bugs Bunny (7 m.) ....Aug. 11  
1709 Fresh Airedale—Looney Tune (7 m.) ....Aug. 25  
1312 Old Glory—Hit. Par. (7 m.) .....Aug. 25  
1710 Bashful Buzzard—Looney Tune (7 m.) ....Sept. 15  
1711 Peck Up Your Troubles—L. Tune (7 m.) Oct. 20  
1313 Busy Bakers—Hit. Par. (7 m.) .....Oct. 20  
1725 Hare Tonic—Bugs Bunny (7 m.) .....Nov. 10  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

2601 Spade Cooley—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) (re.) ..Sept. 1  
2402 Miracle Makers—Varieties (10 m.) .....Sept. 1  
2401 Alice in Jungland—Var. (10 m.) .....Sept. 22  
2602 Here Come the Navy Bands—  
Melody Masters (10 min.) .....Sept. 29  
2603 Musical Novelties—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) ....Oct. 6  
2403 Story of a Dog—Varieties (10 m.) .....Oct. 27  
2501 Sports Go to War—Sports (10 m.) .....Nov. 10  
2301 Sunbonnet Blue—Hit Parade (7 m.) .....Nov. 17

**Vitaphone—Two Reels**

1005 America the Beautiful—Special (20 m.) ....Aug. 4  
1006 Orders from Tokyo—Special (20 m.) ....Aug. 18  
(End of 1944-45 Season)

**Beginning of 1945-46 Season**

2101 Barber Shop Ballads—Featurette (20 m.) ..Sept. 8  
2102 Star in the Night—Featurette (20 m.) .....Oct. 13  
2103 All Star Musical Revue—Feat. (14 m.) ..Nov. 3  
2104 Good Old Corn—Featurette .....Nov. 24  
2801 Fashions for Tomorrow—Special .....Nov. 17

**NEWSWEEKLY****NEW YORK****RELEASE DATES****Pathe News**

65125 Sat. (O) ..Nov. 17  
65226 Wed. (E) .Nov. 22  
65127 Sat. (O) ..Nov. 24  
65228 Wed. (E) .Nov. 29  
65129 Sat. (O) ..Dec. 1  
65230 Wed. (E) .Dec. 6  
65131 Sat. (O) ..Dec. 8  
65232 Wed. (E) .Dec. 13  
65133 Sat. (O) ..Dec. 15  
65234 Wed. (E) .Dec. 20  
65135 Sat. (O) ..Dec. 22  
65236 Wed. (E) .Dec. 27  
65137 Sat. (O) ..Dec. 29  
65238 Wed. (E) .Jan. 3  
65139 Sat. (O) ..Jan. 5

**Paramount News**

23 Sunday (O) ..Nov. 18  
24 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 22  
25 Sunday (O) ..Nov. 26  
26 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 29  
27 Sunday (O) ..Dec. 2  
28 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 6  
29 Sunday (O) ..Dec. 9  
30 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 13  
31 Sunday (O) ..Dec. 16  
32 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 20  
33 Sunday (O) ..Dec. 23  
34 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 27  
35 Sunday (O) ..Dec. 30  
36 Thurs. (E) ...Jan. 3  
37 Sunday (O) ...Jan. 7

**Fox Movietone**

23 Tues. (O) ....Nov. 20  
24 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 22  
25 Tues. (O) ....Nov. 27  
26 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 29  
27 Tues. (O) ....Dec. 4  
28 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 6  
29 Tues. (O) ....Dec. 11  
30 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 13  
31 Tues. (O) ....Dec. 18  
32 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 20  
33 Tues. (O) ....Dec. 25  
34 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 27  
35 Tues. (O) ....Jan. 1  
36 Thurs. (E) ...Jan. 3  
37 Tues. (O) ....Jan. 8

**News of the Day**

221 Tues. (O) ..Nov. 20  
222 Thurs. (E) ..Nov. 22  
223 Tues. (O) ..Nov. 27  
224 Thurs. (E) ..Nov. 29  
225 Tues. (O) ..Dec. 4  
226 Thurs. (E) ..Dec. 6  
227 Tues. (O) ..Dec. 11  
228 Thurs. (E) ..Dec. 13  
229 Tues. (O) ...Dec. 18  
230 Thurs. (E) ..Dec. 20  
231 Tues. (O) ...Dec. 25  
232 Thurs. (E) ..Dec. 27  
233 Tues. (O) ...Jan. 1  
234 Thurs. (E) ...Jan. 3  
235 Tues. (O) ...Jan. 8

**Universal**

451 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 20  
452 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 22  
453 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 27  
454 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 29  
455 Tues. (O) ...Dec. 4  
456 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 6  
457 Tues. (O) ...Dec. 11  
458 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 13  
459 Tues. (O) ...Dec. 18  
460 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 20  
461 Tues. (O) ...Dec. 25  
462 Thurs. (E) ...Dec. 27  
463 Tues. (O) ...Jan. 1  
464 Thurs. (E) ...Jan. 3  
465 Tues. (O) ...Jan. 8

**All American News**

160 Friday .....Nov. 16  
161 Friday .....Nov. 23  
162 Friday .....Nov. 30  
163 Friday .....Dec. 7  
164 Friday .....Dec. 14  
165 Friday .....Dec. 21  
166 Friday .....Dec. 28  
167 Friday .....Jan. 4



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## Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....	\$15.00
U. S. Insular Possessions.	16.50
Canada .....	16.50
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35c a Copy	

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New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
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Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
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Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1945

No. 47

### SAM GOLDWYN — A PROBLEM CHILD

Sam Goldwyn has been the spoiled child of the motion picture industry. He considers publicity as a toy, and it seems as if, whenever one of his publicity men presents him with an idea of bringing his name to the attention of the public, he jumps at it, as a child jumps to grab a new toy.

But like a child, Sam does not know that certain toys are dangerous to play with, and whenever he is hurt he yells.

In the October 27 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, your attention was called to a Sam Goldwyn interview that appeared in *Showmen's Trade Review*, under the heading "Goldwyn Snubs Subsequents." The gist of the interview was that Sam Goldwyn does not care for the money from the subsequent-runs, and that if he had fifty top first-run houses throughout the country to play his pictures in he could, not only recoup the cost of his negatives, positive prints, and advertising, but also make a profit. He could then forget about the subsequent-run theatres, on the ground that they are economically unattractive because of the high cost of selling and servicing them.

Taking his cue from what Goldwyn was reported to have said in that interview, and from criticism that was made of him in these columns, Pete Wood, business manager of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, sent to the members of his association a bulletin suggesting that they accommodate Sam Goldwyn by not booking his pictures. As a matter of fact, Pete proposed the formation of a "Make-It-Easy-for-Sam Goldwyn League," the members of which were to pledge themselves not to play any Goldwyn pictures, as an accommodation to Goldwyn.

But it is evident that Sam's remarks, as reported by *Showmen's Trade Review*, as well as by *The Independent* and *The Exhibitor*, the subsequent criticism in HARRISON'S REPORTS, and the action of Pete Wood, gave Sam quite a jolt, for he now tells us that he had been, not only misunderstood, but also "entirely misquoted" by the trade-press reporters.

In denying the accuracy of the trade-press reporters, Goldwyn, in a prepared statement, said:

"I did say that I thought the ideal way to show pictures in our bigger cities was to play them simultaneously in about fifty situations in theatres with a seating capacity of 1200 to 1400. I thoroughly believe that such a policy would not only not harm the subsequent-runs but could materially benefit them.

"To quote me as saying, 'I want my pictures to play in only fifty theatres throughout the country' is simply nonsense."

In publishing Goldwyn's claim that he had been misquoted, *Showmen's Trade Review*, in its November 10 issue, stated that it was doing so as a courtesy to Goldwyn, but emphasized that its action was "not to be construed as indicating that we wish to retract or amend our report of the Goldwyn interview held in New York on Oct. 15. That report was prepared from notes that were checked by our reporter—whom, we wish to add, has been a member of our staff for many months, has had years of training and experience in reporting. . . . Furthermore, as far as we know, no paper reporting the interview has quoted nor referred to the statement which . . . Goldwyn declares to be the correct quotation of his remarks on subsequent-runs."

*The Exhibitor*, too, has refused to retract or amend its original report of this interview. Mel Konecoff, that paper's New York correspondent, had this to say in his weekly column regarding Goldwyn's denial:

"Memo to Mr. Goldwyn: You're not hinting that we and another trade paper reporter who also ran an almost identical story are twisters-of-facts, are you? Or is that merely a way of telling us how a story should be written? How could you? After a re-examination of our notes taken at the interview, we can only state that our report on the matter still stands."

The firm stand taken by these papers apparently disturbed Goldwyn, for he had his publicity agent arrange another meeting with representatives of the aforementioned papers, to which this writer was invited. The gist of Goldwyn's remarks at this meeting was that he could not understand why he should be made into a target by the trade papers. He claimed that news items and editorials about him, particularly the editorials that have appeared in these columns, were treating him unjustly, for he, more than any other person in the industry, has been and still is the best friend the independent exhibitor ever had. He pointed out that the pressure exerted against him by some of the large circuits has resulted in a closer relationship between him and the independents, who have often bought his pictures away from the large circuits. Goldwyn stated also that any independent who bought his pictures away from a large competitor was subsequently shown preference so long as he con-

(Continued on last page)



### **"San Antonio" with Errol Flynn and Alexis Smith**

(Warner Bros., Dec. 29; time, 110 min.)

In spite of the fact that it offers nothing startling in the way of novelty of plot or of action, this "glorified" Western, photographed in Technicolor, is a good entertainment of its type. It should go over fairly well with an average audience, for it blends fast and exciting action with romance and comedy. Errol Flynn's popularity will undoubtedly mean much at the box-office. As a Texas rancher who breaks up a powerful ring of cattle rustlers, Flynn makes a fearless hero, with enough dash and bravado to endear him to the ladies. There is plentiful horseback riding, shooting, and fighting—enough to satisfy the most ardent Western fans. One sequence that will undoubtedly thrill them is the one in which a rousing barroom brawl takes place. In between the melodramatic scenes, one is kept amused by the antics of S. Z. Sakall:—

In his fight against organized bands of cattle rustlers, Flynn obtains from a slain rustler a cattle tally book indicating that Paul Kelly, operator of a music hall in San Antonio, was leader of the outlaws. To reach San Antonio safely, Flynn outwits Kelly's gunmen by commandeering a ride in a private stagecoach chartered by Alexis Smith, a New York actress, who had been booked by her manager (S. Z. Sakall) to perform in Kelly's music hall. Flynn, upon reaching San Antonio, organizes a group of ranchers to help him prove Kelly's guilt. Kelly, aware that Flynn had possession of the tally book, schemes to regain it. Meanwhile Victor Francen, Kelly's partner in the music hall, planned to obtain the tally book so that he could blackmail Kelly into a partnership in the cattle rustling business. On the night of Alexis' opening performance, Flynn accepts an invitation to visit her dressing room, but first takes the precaution of leaving the tally book with John Litel, one of his rancher friends. Kelly, who had intercepted the invitation, ambushes Flynn, but fails in an attempt to kill him. During the fracas, Litel is killed by Francen, who obtains the tally book. Litel's murder is unwittingly witnessed by Sakall, who, threatened by Francen, agrees to keep his identity secret. Sakall eventually confides to Alexis that he had witnessed Francen's killing of Litel, and she in turn gives the information to Flynn, who had been appointed as town marshall to find the killer. When Flynn attempts to make the arrest, a fight between the ranchers and the outlaws takes place in the music hall. Francen and Kelly both make their escape, with Flynn in hot pursuit. In the course of events, Kelly kills Francen to regain the tally book, only to meet death himself when he clashes with Flynn in a running gunfight.

Alan LeMay and W. R. Burnett wrote the screen play, Robert Buckner produced it, and David Butler directed it. The cast includes Florence Bates and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Johnny in the Clouds" with an all-English cast**

(United Artists, Feb. 15; time, 88 min.)

A good British-made war drama that in story, direction, and acting reflects credit on all concerned in its making; but, like numerous other good war dramas that are reaching theatres at a time when most people are shopping for "escapist" entertainment, its box-office chances are questionable. Originally released in England under the title, "The Way to the Stars," it offers a genuinely stirring story concerning the private lives of a group of American and British fliers, who shared an English airfield in the early days of the war. Unlike most war pictures, this one should appeal to feminine audiences, for it is void of battle sequences, and it tells with considerable human appeal and tenderness of the friendships, loves, and tragedies experienced by the different characters. Although it is a serious picture, it is not without its moments of rich humor, most of which concerns the British fliers' belief that they would not like the American fliers,

and the equal certainty on the part of the Americans that the British fliers would be difficult to get along with.

The story opens in 1940 with the arrival of John Mills, a young, inexperienced RAF flier, at the airfield. Michael Redgrave, his squadron leader, gives him inspiration and encouragement, and both soon become fast friends. Redgrave marries Rosamund John, cultured manager of an inn nearby the airfield, and Mills falls in love with Renee Asherson, a guest at the inn. When Redgrave loses his life on a bombing mission, leaving Rosamund with a baby son, Mills, aware of the widow's unhappy lot, begins to deliberately neglect Renee because of a conviction that it was unfair for fliers to marry during war-time. Meanwhile a squadron of American fliers had taken over the airfield, and Douglas Montgomery, an American pilot, who had a wife and two children at home, becomes fast friends with Mills and with Rosamund, in a platonic way. When Montgomery, too, loses his life, the tragedy serves to accentuate Mills' aversion for war-time marriages. Rosamund, realizing what was troubling him, has a long talk with him and is instrumental in getting him to renew his romance with Renee and to lead her to the altar.

Terence Rattigan wrote the screen play, Anatole de Grunwald produced it, and Anthony Asquith directed it. The cast includes Stanley Holoway, Felix Aylmer, Bonar Colleano, Jr., and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Last Chance" with an all-foreign cast**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 105 min.)

From a production point of view—that is, story construction, photography and acting, this Swiss-made war melodrama compares favorably with the better war dramas that have been produced in Hollywood. The story, which opens in Italy in 1943, and which deals with the adventures of two escaped Allied soldiers—an American and an Englishman, who aid a group of international political refugees to flee across Northern Italy to the safety of the Swiss border, grips one's attention throughout. The manner in which this helpless group of people, including a few orphaned children, make their grim march through mountain snows, at the mercy of the elements and of the ever-present enemy, give the picture many high moments of suspense and of drama. Considerable human interest is brought about by the harmony with which the refugees, each of a different nationality, work together as they strive to reach their common goal, and by their tolerant understanding of one another's problems and heartaches. Without resorting to preachment, the story is, in fact, an eloquent and effective plea for racial tolerance. Although English is the predominant language spoken, the dialogue includes French, Italian, Yiddish, German, Serbian, and Swiss, which are translated through superimposed English subtitles. Because of the fact that it is a war melodrama, and of the fact that the players are unknown in this country, the picture will undoubtedly require considerable exploitation to attract American movie-goers, but, once in the theatre, they should find it extremely interesting.

In the development of the plot, the two Allied soldiers escape from an enemy train transporting prisoners to Germany. Italian underground workers help them to find refuge with an Italian priest, who harbored international refugees and arranged for a village guide to lead them over mountain passes into Switzerland. When the retreating Germans attack the village and kill the guide, the Allied soldiers decide to head for Switzerland immediately. The priest, however, asks them not to leave the refugees at the mercy of the retreating Germans, and to take them along. Realizing that their own chances of escape would be endangered, the Allied soldiers agree. All start out on the difficult trek to Switzerland and, after many hardships, sacrifices, and narrow brushes with the enemy, succeed in reaching their goal.

Richard Schweizer wrote the screen play, L. Wechsler produced it, and Leopold Lindtberg directed it. The cast includes E. G. Morrison, John Hoy, Ray Reagan and many others.



**"Cornered" with Dick Powell**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 102 min.)

It is evident that RKO, employing the same producer-director-star combination, meant to make this melodrama as thrilling as "Murder, My Sweet," but it has made just a fairly good entertainment. The chief fault with the picture is that its makers, apparently striving to inject a maximum amount of intrigue and suspense, have allowed the story to wander all over the lot, with the result that, on the whole, it becomes long drawn out and tiresome, in spite of the fact that it achieves many high moments of suspense. Dick Powell, as the tough RAF flier seeking to avenge the murder of his French wife by a mysterious collaborationist, delivers a forceful performance, as does Walter Slezak, as a crooked Argentine guide. Most of the excitement occurs at the finish, where Powell tracks down the elusive murderer and beats him to death. It is not a pleasant entertainment, for the action throughout is lurid:—

Honorably discharged from the RAF, Powell goes to France and learns that his patriotic French bride had been murdered by collaborationists during the German occupation. Determined to track down and kill the traitor responsible, Powell learns that a man named "Jarnac" was the one he sought. He is told by French officials that "Jarnac" had been slain, but, suspecting a hoax to conceal "Jarnac's" fascist activities, he sets out on his trail. The pursuit leads him to Argentina, where he is met by Walter Slezak, a professional guide, who, seemingly acquainted with "Jarnac's" activities, takes him to a party at the fashionable home of a wealthy Argentine couple, where he meets Morris Carnovsky, an attorney, and Micheline Cheirel, who is introduced as "Jarnac's" wife. Powell bluntly tells her that he was after her husband, and doggedly settles down to watch her movements. Carnovsky, however, reveals to him that he and Micheline headed a group of Argentine patriots, and that they, too, were seeking "Jarnac" to stop his fascist activities in South America. Powell, still determined to have his revenge, soon finds himself in trouble with the collaborationists, who sought to keep him from "Jarnac," and with the anti-collaborationists, who wanted him out of the way because he interfered with their plans. After a series of many incidents, in which Slezak, posing as his friend but actually a collaborationist, tries to betray him, Powell eventually meets up with "Jarnac" (Luther Adler) and murders him. Carnovsky, grateful that Powell had helped smash the fascist ring, promises to defend him against the murder charge.

John Paxton wrote the screen play, Adrian Scott produced it, and Edward Dmytryk directed it. The cast includes Edgar Barrier, Jack LaRue, Steven Geray, Nina Vale and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Getting Gertie's Garter" with Dennis O'Keefe and Marie McDonald**

(United Artists, Nov. 30; time, 73 min.)

A pretty good farce-comedy. Based on the stage play of the same title, which was produced on Broadway about twenty-five years ago, and which was made into a silent picture by P.D.C. in 1927, the story revolves around the efforts of a young scientist to retrieve from his former sweetheart an expensive garter he had given her. The idea being that if either the scientist's wife or the former sweetheart's fiancé learned of the garter there would be trouble. The pursuit of the garter results in the usual farcical complications, such as bedroom mixups and other situations in which some of the characters try to hide from other characters so that their presence together would not be misconstrued. The situations keep one laughing and giggling all the way through, and they are helped greatly by the zestful acting of the players:—

Dennis O'Keefe, a brilliant young scientist, is served with a subpoena to testify against a store clerk charged with embezzlement. The charge was based on the fact that the clerk had absconded with money given to him by O'Keefe for the purchase of an inscribed garter, which he had given to Marie

McDonald, his former sweetheart, who was to be married to Barry Sullivan, his best friend. Visualizing the ruin of his career and of his marriage to Sheila Ryan, should the garter incident get into the newspapers, O'Keefe sets out to retrieve the garter. His pursuit leads him to the home of Binnie Barnes and Jerome Cowan, where Marie's wedding was to take place on the following day. Meanwhile Sheila, suspicious of his worrisome actions, follows him. Marie, thinking of her own happiness, refuses to give up the garter until O'Keefe makes a clean breast of it to his wife. She hides the garter in a wastebasket only to have it disappear when the maid cleans her room. In the meantime O'Keefe had started a search that leads him in and out of Marie's bedroom under circumstances that cause both his wife and Sullivan to become suspicious. Sheila, aided by Cowan, tries to check on his movements, but their actions, too, lead them into a number of compromising situations. To make matters even more complicated, the garter falls into the hands of J. Carroll Naish, a blackmailing butler. Matters become so confused that Marie, tired of it all, finally tells the true story, and all become reconciled.

Allan Dwan and Karen DeWolf wrote the screen play from the stage play by Wilson Collison and Avery Hopwood. Edward Small produced it, and Mr. Dwan directed it. The cast includes Vera Marshe, Frank Fenton and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Saratoga Trunk" with Gary Cooper and Ingrid Bergman**

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 135 min.)

Very good! With two box-office names such as Ingrid Bergman and Gary Cooper, its success at the box-office is practically guaranteed. The production is extremely lavish, and the story, based on Edna Ferber's widely-read novel, offers a mixture of romance, comedy, chicanery, and melodrama that is sure to please the majority of movie-goers, in spite of the fact that, under close scrutiny, it adds up to no more than a melange of Hollywood hokum, artificial but colorful. As such, it is exciting and engrossing entertainment, mainly because of the excellent work of the stars. Ingrid Bergman, as the vengeful, fiery-tempered heroine, is both fascinating and beautiful; her magnificent interpretation of the role marks her as one of the most versatile actresses on the screen. Gary Cooper, as the tough, lanky Texas gambler, with whom she falls in love, is exceptionally good. Although nothing offensive is shown, the story's theme and the acts of the different characters make it unsuitable for children. The action takes place in New Orleans and Saratoga in the 1875's. The clothes worn by Miss Bergman should delight women patrons:—

Accompanied by Flora Robson, a mulatto, and Jerry Austin, a dwarf, both her servants, Ingrid, a frank adventuress and illegitimate daughter of an aristocrat of New Orleans, returns to that city from Paris, determined to take revenge on her father's family, who had treated her mother shabbily, and also to find a wealthy husband. In the course of succeeding in her revenge, Ingrid meets and falls in love with Cooper, who, objecting to her methods, leaves her. He writes to her several weeks later from Saratoga, and informs her that the place was crawling with millionaires, and that it was made to order for her talents. Posing as a widowed French Countess, Ingrid goes to Saratoga Springs, where she cleverly becomes a sensation and wins the heart of John Warburton, a young railroad millionaire. While Ingrid schemes to marry Warburton, Cooper works a plan of his own to gain control of a railroad from a group of financiers who had once cheated his father. He becomes involved in a fight with the financiers' gangsters and is wounded seriously. Seeing him injured and bloody, Ingrid hurls herself at him with endearing cries. She declares her love for him and gives up all thoughts and schemes to marry a millionaire.

Casey Robinson wrote the screen play, Hal B. Wallis produced it, and Sam Wood directed it. The cast includes Florence Bates, John Abbott and others.



tinued to be a Goldwyn customer. All in all, Sam Goldwyn went to great lengths to convince the trade-press representatives at the meeting that he was grossly misunderstood, and that he was entitled to kindlier treatment in their reports about him.

As it has already been said at the beginning of this article, Sam Goldwyn yells when he is hurt. He should be more careful about what he has to say, before rushing into print again. After all, he is one of the industry's recognized leaders, and, as such, should realize that his words, his ideas, and his actions are subject to close scrutiny. Moreover, he has an obligation, if not to the exhibitors, at least to the salesmen of the company that is selling his pictures—RKO. The effect of Sam's statement on the sales of his pictures among the subsequent-run exhibitors must have been demoralizing. These salesmen must have had a trying time offsetting Goldwyn's thoughtless remarks about a class of his customers.

The continuance of recriminations about the incident can serve no further purpose. All the parties involved have had a chance to talk things over, and to make their positions clear to one another. HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that, as a result of this incident, Sam Goldwyn will have a finer appreciation of the potency of his statements, and will, therefore, weigh his ideas carefully before expressing them in public. He will then have no cause to complain about his relationship with the trade press.

### A WORTHY IDEA BUT HIGHLY EMBARRASSING

From time to time, a prominent member of the motion picture industry gets an inspiration of sending out a chain letter with the purpose of increasing the sale of War Stamps. From among his friends, he selects ten and sends them each a 25 cent War Stamp. Each of these friends is in turn requested to select ten of his friends, send each a 25 cent War Stamp, with a request that they, too, select ten friends and ask each to repeat the process. The general idea is that, eventually, each of the letter senders will receive back from ten persons ten 25 cent stamps.

There are other detailed instructions contained in the letter, all designed to perpetuate the chain, but what I have dealt with is enough to give the reader an idea of what the chain-letter system is like, if he does not already know it.

The person who conceived the chain letter idea feels that it is the patriotic duty of every letter recipient to help augment the sale of War Stamps; he believes that, if every one of his friends and their friends perpetuate the chain, the sale of War Stamps will be so pyramided that the Government will receive enough money to pay the nation's war debt.

Last summer I received one such letter and, being unwilling to scrap it, I followed the suggestions. Some of the ten friends to whom I wrote have answered me, saying that they were so snowed under with similar letters that they could not possibly carry out my suggestions. And I have no doubt that the other nine friends of the person who sent me the chain letter received similar complaints if they followed the chain letter suggestions.

From Philadelphia I received a letter from one of my friends informing me that the Post Office authorities in that city had declared chain letters to be in violation of the postal regulations even if they are intended to benefit the United States Government.

Regardless of whether the chain letter to increase the sale of war stamps is or is not violating postal regulations, the idea itself is annoying, for most letter recipients haven't either the facilities or the time to write ten letters. Moreover, they are loath to impose upon their friends; they feel that it would be better for a friend to ask for a direct contribution to the cause, for the labor involved costs more than the War Stamp contribution.

It is a good idea in theory, but wrong in practice.

### "Mexicana" with Tito Guizar and Constance Moore

(Republic, no release date set; time 84 min.)

Although it has been produced on a pretty lavish scale, this comedy with Latin-American music is only mildly entertaining and often dull. Not much can be said for the story, which is not only trite but also silly and tiresome. The players strive hard to be funny, but they fail to make an impression; most of the comedy situations, which range from bedroom farce to slapstick antics on the narrow ledge of a high building, fall flat. Tito Guizar and Constance Moore put over the musical numbers in competent style; but the songs are not outstanding. The picture's setting is Mexico, and worked into the plot are the usual scenes of festive gayety one expects to see in musicals of this type, but all this is presented in so routine a fashion that it leaves the spectator unmoved:—

Tired of the frenzied adoration of his feminine fans, Tito Guizar, a popular Mexican crooner, enters into a scheme cooked up by his manager (Leo Carrillo) whereby Constance Moore, a visiting American musical star, would pose as his secret wife; Guizar hoped that his fans, believing that he was married, would let him live peacefully. Constance agrees to the hoax at the insistence of her manager (Howard Freeman), but against her better judgment. Convinced that Guizar was a conceited fellow, Constance plans to teach him a lesson. Their clashing temperaments soon result in numerous scenes and quarrels as both try to outwit one another in their efforts to gain public attention. Meanwhile Estilita Rodriguez, a fiery Mexican dancer who looked upon Guizar as her own, suspects that the "marriage" was a hoax, and her efforts to expose it compel Guizar to confine himself to Constance's bedroom suite. Matters become even more complicated when Carrillo and Freeman, to give the "marriage" authenticity, arrange with two youngsters to pose as the couple's children. This move gives Estilita an opportunity to expose the marriage as a hoax. She gives the story to the newspapers, and the unfavorable publicity results in a break between Constance and Guizar, who by this time had really fallen in love. It all turns out for the best, however, when both are reunited at a gay Pan-American festival.

Frank Gill, Jr., wrote the screen play, and Alfred Santell produced and directed it. The cast includes Steven Geray and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



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New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1945

No. 48

### THE TRIAL IS ENDED

As most of you undoubtedly know by this time, the trial of the Government's New York anti-trust case against the eight major producers was concluded on November 20, after consuming no more than twenty days of courtroom testimony. The speed with which the trial was carried through has astonished most informed industryites, who had expected that the proceedings would last as much as six months.

The only details still remaining in the suit are the filing of briefs by both sides, and the presentation of oral arguments. The Government has until December 15 to file its brief, while the defendants have until January 7 to file theirs. The Court has set January 15 as the day on which it will hear the oral arguments of both sides.

As was to be expected, predictions as to the final outcome of the trial are filling the air thick and fast, with varying reasons given by the predictors as to why one side or the other will emerge victorious.

In the opinion of this paper, it is yet too early for one to make predictions, because of the intricacies of the evidence and of the testimony thus far presented by both sides. For instance, the Government has submitted approximately 450 documents to prove its charges of monopoly against the defendants, and one would have to study these documents carefully to understand their full significance before he could qualify as a predictor. And, before venturing his prediction, he would also have to make a close study of the material offered by the defendants. Even the Court hasn't had time for such a study.

It is possible that, with the filing of briefs and the presentation of oral arguments, the evidence and testimony presented thus far may be summarized in a manner that will give to the unbiased observer a clearer picture of the strength and weakness of each side, thus putting him in a better position to predict the outcome. For the present, however, predictions should be held in abeyance, for they can be nothing more than either propaganda or guess-work.

### A CITATION FOR THE INDUSTRY

"In recognition of its united efforts in war and continued assistance in war time," says a Washington dispatch to *Motion Picture Daily*, "the industry will be given a Government citation signed by President Truman, and the War, Treasury and Navy Departments, on Dec. 4, , , ,"

Just how much good will a citation do for the industry unless the public is told about this citation and about what induced the President and the three governmental departments to issue it?

During the last two years of the War, HARRISON'S REPORTS continued urging the leaders of the industry

to take page advertisements in the newspapers and the national magazines to make known to the public what the motion picture industry was doing, not only for the nation, but also for the members of the armed forces.

The heads of other industries took such ads to gain good will by establishing in the minds of the public what they had done and were doing to help the nation win the war. What the motion picture industry did for the war effort, however, was far greater than that of any other industry, including newspapers and radio. The picture industry sold billions and billions of dollars worth of bonds, presented to the three branches of the armed services more than forty million dollars worth of film exhibitions, and brought to the members of the armed services a bit of home during their rest periods, helping greatly to keep up their morale. But this paper's pleas for institutional advertising were made in vain. And the crackpot politicians, aware that the industry has done nothing to gain the public's good will, have been and still are sniping at it.

The industry leaders could have used the industry's war-time aid to the Government as a means of convincing the Congressional tax committees that the twenty per cent tax on admissions should be either repealed entirely or cut substantially, but most of our industry leaders either are tired old men or they have made their "pile" and care little about what happens to the industry now.

Will some younger executives undertake to do what the older executives are failing to do?

### WELCOME TO A NEW PRODUCER

Hal Horne, former Director of Advertising, Publicity and Exploitation for 20th Century-Fox, has issued an announcement of the formation of a new production company to be known as Story Productions, Inc., with Armand Deutsch, as president, and Horne as chairman of the board and executive vice-president.

The announcement states that the company has already acquired several best-selling novels, and that it is presently negotiating with well known producers, directors and writers for their services in the company's production plans.

For years Hal Horne has been recognized as one of the leaders in planned exploitation campaigns, and as such his experience qualifies him as a man who should know the likes and dislikes of the picture-going public.

This paper, which for years has encouraged more independent production, welcomes Hal Horne into the field and wishes him the best of success.

### **"A Walk in the Sun" with Dana Andrews and Richard Conte**

(20th-Century-Fox, January; time, 117 min.)

This is a distinguished war melodrama, produced and directed with great care, and it will probably be hailed by many critics as one of the outstanding war pictures yet made. Its box-office possibilities, however, are questionable, first, because it is a war picture, and secondly, because its appeal will be directed mostly to high-class audiences. It is doubtful if the masses will give the picture the support it deserves, for the action is slowed down considerably by an overabundance of dialogue. As a matter of fact, except for an occasional burst of battle action, the characters do nothing but talk, talk, talk. True, this dialogue is meaningful, for it concerns that thoughts and reactions of soldiers under battle conditions, but there is so much of it that it comes to a point where one begins to squirm. Another drawback, particularly as far as women are concerned, is that the picture has an all-male cast; there is no romantic interest.

The story, which takes place in Italy in 1943, at the Salerno beachhead, revolves around a platoon of American soldiers who become isolated from the rest of the invasion force, and around their trials and tribulations as they strive to attain their objective—a blockhouse, six miles inland, camouflaged as a farmhouse, which the Nazis were using to guard a bridge. The capture of this objective is marked by several thrilling combat scenes, and by individual feats of daring and sacrifice. In between these melodramatic incidents, the story concerns itself chiefly with the reactions of the different soldiers to the conditions that plucked them out of a peaceful civilian existence and placed them on a battlefield. In many respects, the picture is not unlike "The Story of G.I. Joe," for it is a personalized story of the part the infantryman has played in the war. The characterizations of the soldiers are colorful; each comes from a different walk in life, and on the whole they represent a cross-section of the many thousands of American soldiers who have served.

Dana Andrews, the best known player in the cast, gives a good account of himself as the sergeant who finds himself in charge of operations when his immediate superior, lacking confidence in himself, orders him to assume command. Acting honors, however, go to Richard Conte for his excellent portrayal of a cocky machine gunner.

Robert Rossen wrote the screenplay from a story by Harry Brown, and Lewis Milestone produced and directed it. The cast includes Sterling Holloway, George Tyne, Norman Lloyd, Lloyd Bridges and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"A Letter for Evie" with Marsha Hunt, Hume Cronyn and John Carroll**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 89 min.)

The mistaken identity theme has been used to good advantage in this comedy-drama; it should please most audiences. The story, which revolves around a meek, small-built soldier, who starts a letter-writing romance with a pretty girl, but represents himself as a brawny, romantic fellow by mailing her a picture of his buddy, has a number of novel twists. Most of the comedy stems from the fact that the buddy learns of the romance and takes advantage of the ruse. The manner in which the little fellow attempts to foil his buddy, while keeping the girl from learning the truth, results in many hilarious situations. The ending is satisfying, for the meek fellow, with whom the audience sympathizes, wins the girl:—

Marsha Hunt, secretary in a New York shirt factory, seeks romance. She puts a letter in the pocket of a shirt, destined for shipment to an army camp, and invites the recipient to write to her. The shirt is issued to John Carroll, a woman-jilting soldier, who reads the letter and throws it away, but Hume Cronyn, his buddy, a lonesome little fellow, recovers it. He answers the letter and includes a picture

of Carroll as himself. Marsha, enthralled by the picture, starts a letter-writing romance with Cronyn. Ordered overseas, Cronyn and his company pause in New York. Eager to meet Marsha, he goes to her apartment and, assuming Carroll's name, tells her that "Cronyn" had been sent away on a secret mission, and that he, as "Cronyn's buddy," had been asked to entertain her. Meanwhile at the barracks, Carroll discovers one of Marsha's letters and learns of the ruse. The next evening he follows Cronyn to Marsha's apartment and, assuming Cronyn's name, sweeps Marsha into his arms. Knowing Carroll's reputation with women, Cronyn resorts to many tricks to keep him away from Marsha, but his efforts are unavailing; Marsha and Carroll become engaged. But before the marriage can take place both men are sent overseas. In France, Carroll marries a French girl. Marsha, concerned about not hearing from Carroll, visits the home of Cronyn's parents, where she discovers that Cronyn and not Carroll had written the love letters. When Cronyn is returned home wounded, he goes to Marsha and, still assuming Carroll's name, informs her that her lover had been killed rather than hurt her with the news of Carroll's marriage. Marsha, by this time in love with Cronyn, informs him that she knew the truth and slips her arms around his neck.

De Vallon Scott and Alan Friedman wrote the screen play, William H. Wright produced it, and Jules Dassin directed it. The cast includes Pamela Britton and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Man in Grey" with James Mason and Margaret Lockwood**

(Universal, no release date set; time, 92 min.)

This adult romantic drama is a fairly good British costume picture, produced lavishly, but much of it is unpleasant. Set in the early 1800's, the story is a mixture of romance, chicanery, and violence, fascinatingly played by a competent cast. The unpleasantness is caused by the brutal behaviour of the heroine's husband, and by the cruel, conniving antics of his conscienceless mistress, who posed as his wife's friend. Particularly disagreeable are the sequences in which the mistress mercilessly causes the heroine to die, only to be beaten to death herself by the husband. The heroine, who had been tricked into a marriage of convenience, is a sympathetic character, and one understands her reasons for wanting to run away with another man. Their romance provides the picture with many pleasant moments, but one will leave the theatre conscious only of the unpleasantness:—

Phyllis Calvert, a pretty London debutante, is tricked by her mother into marrying James Mason, an arrogant nobleman, who did not love her but required a heir for his title. After their son is born, both agree to lead their own lives but to outwardly keep up the appearance of their marriage. Phyllis meets up with Margaret Lockwood, a penniless actress who had been her school chum, and insists that she come home to live with her. Mason, though learning that Margaret had been leading a shady life, falls in love with her and makes her his mistress secretly. Margaret immediately plots to oust Phyllis from the house. Meanwhile Phyllis had met Stewart Granger, a dashing adventurer from the West Indies, and a romance between them is started. Margaret fosters the romance to gain her own ends, then engineers a fight between Mason and Granger, causing Mason to order Phyllis out of the house. Phyllis decides to go to Jamaica with Granger, but the Prince Regent persuades her to return to Mason to avoid a scandal. On her return home, Phyllis is taken ill, and Margaret, furious because her plans had been upset, allows her to catch a chill and die. Mason, frightened that a scandal might tarnish his name, thrashes Margaret to death.

Margaret Kennedy and Leslie Arliss wrote the screen play, Edward Black produced it, and Mr. Arliss directed it. It is a Gainsborough production.

Not suitable for children.



### **"Hit the Hay" with Judy Canova and Ross Hunter**

(Columbia, Nov. 29; time, 62 min.)

Sixty-two minutes of unbearable boredom! If Academy Awards were handed out for the dullest comedy of the year, this one would undoubtedly win first prize. The story is insipid, tedious, and long drawn out, with very little action. The characters behave in so ridiculous a manner that the spectator becomes impatient with them. The plot is interspersed with songs, several which are operatic arias, which Judy Canova sings in burlesque fashion, but her efforts to be funny fall flat. It is doubtful if even her most ardent followers will find Miss Canova's antics entertaining:—

Ross Hunter faces bankruptcy because of his inability to secure financial backing from Paul Stanton for his civic opera company. Lunching in a food market, Ross finds Judy singing operatic arias while milking a cow. Discovering that she was the daughter of a former opera singer, Ross takes her to Stanton who, after hearing her voice, agrees to finance the opera. Ross enlists the aid of Doris Merrick, his girl-friend columnist, who gives Judy a publicity build-up. He soon finds that, although Judy sang well, she was totally lacking in acting ability. Lest he lose his financial backer, Ross, in desperation, conceives the idea of having Judy sing from the wings while a double played her part on the stage. Gloria Holden, another singer, who was jealous of Judy's success, demands the leading role under threat of exposing Judy as a fraud. Ross succeeds in thwarting Gloria's scheme, but Judy, stricken with remorse, refuses to deceive the public in further operas. To save the opera company, however, Judy writes her own version of "William Tell," designed to suit her special talents. The novelty of the production appeals to the opera patrons, and Judy emerges a greater success than ever.

Richard Weil and Charles Marion wrote the original screenplay, Ted Richmond produced it, and Del Lord directed it. The cast includes Fortunio Bonanova, Francis Pierlot, Grady Sutton and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"House of Dracula" with Lon Chaney, John Carradine and Onslow Stevens**

(Universal, Dec. 7; time, 67 min.)

This is another one of Universal's horror concoctions, for which it has resurrected its deathless trio—Frankenstein's Monster, the Wolf Man, and Dracula. To these three playmates it has added the inevitable mad scientist, and the net result is an entertainment that is more ludicrous than terrifying; it may prove acceptable to the avid, indiscriminating horror picture fans, but the more discriminating patrons will be either amused or bored. In story and in treatment, it is a rehash of familiar horror picture formulas. Much happens, but nothing that will surprise anyone. Since the action is considerably gruesome in spots it is not suitable entertainment for children:—

Engaged in research for the correction of human deformities, Onslow Stevens, an eminent scientist, is asked by "Count Dracula" (John Carradine) to cure him of the vampire curse. Stevens was unaware that "Dracula" was merely seeking to further his unholy interest in Martha O'Driscoll, his (Steven's) secretary. Meanwhile Lon Chaney enlists the scientist's aid in relieving a brain pressure, which, at full moon, transformed him into a werewolf. Chaney, impatient about the cure, attempts suicide by throwing himself into the sea. In his rescue of Chaney, the scientist finds Frankenstein's Monster lying in a cave. Stevens decides to restore life to the Monster, but Jane Adams, his hunchback nurse, dissuades him. In the course of treating "Dracula," Stevens, following a transfusion, becomes contaminated with his blood and finds himself turning into a vampire. The affliction causes him to suffer periodic strokes of insanity, during which he brings about "Dracula's" permanent

death, and murders Ludwig Stossel, his kindly handyman. In his sane moments, however, he manages to perform a successful operation on Chaney. In the meantime, the villagers, having discovered that Stevens had murdered Stossel, form a posse to hang him. By this time completely mad, Stevens murders his nurse and gives life to Frankenstein's Monster. Chaney, to protect himself and Martha, kills the scientist. He then starts a fire, causing the Monster to perish in the flames.

Edward T. Lowe wrote the screenplay, Paul Malvern produced it, and Erle C. Kenton directed it. The cast includes Lionel Atwill, Glenn Strange and others.

### **"The Bells of St. Mary's" with Bing Crosby and Ingrid Bergman**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 126 min.)

Excellent! That it will be a smash box-office success is assured, not only because of the stars' wide popularity, but also because it is a simple, inspired entertainment, the sort the masses will relish. As in "Going My Way," which he also wrote, produced, and directed, Leo McCarey has proved again that great pictures do not require pretentious stories. "The Bells of St. Mary's" tells a simple story, which, in warmth, human appeal, wholesomeness, and humor, is in every way comparable to "Going My Way." In it we find Bing Crosby cast once again as "Father O'Malley," the youthful, understanding parish priest, this time taking over a new assignment as pastor of a parochial school, which was in a bad state of repair, and which had inadequate funds. How he helps Ingrid Bergman, the Sister Superior, to acquire a new building, despite their good-mannered differences over school matters, is told in such a charming and human way that those who will see the picture will leave the theatre with a feeling that they would like to see it again.

The story, though simple, is rich in incidents, some of which are highly amusing, and others that cannot help tugging at one's heart-strings. For example, there is considerable appeal in Crosby's undertaking to reconcile an estranged couple so that their dejected 'teen-age daughter could have a happy home life. Another phase of the story that is rich in humor and in human interest is the manner in which Miss Bergman and Crosby, working independently, soften the heart of a crochety old millionaire and induce him to donate his new office building, adjoining the school grounds, for a new school. Among the many delightful highlights are Miss Bergman's efforts to teach a young boy the manly art of self-defense, only to be knocked down flat when she invites him to try to hit her on the chin, and the staging of a Christmas play by a group of kindergarden children, who enact their own version of the Nativity—both sequences are memorable. Crosby's singing of a few religious songs, in which he is joined by Miss Bergman, adds much to the picture's entertaining qualities.

The dramatic phase of the story concerns the illness of Miss Bergman, who develops a touch of tuberculosis but is not told about it. Crosby, advised by the doctor that she needed a milder climate, arranges for her transfer from St. Mary's but, unwilling to tell her the truth, allows her to think that she was being transferred because of their differences. The closing scenes, where she leaves the school, and where Crosby brings himself to tell her the true reason, are powerfully dramatic.

The acting of the entire cast is excellent. Crosby delights one with his ease and natural charm, and Miss Bergman will undoubtedly rise to new heights of popularity because of the effective way in which she portrays her role. Watching them both, one forgets that they are acting. Leo McCarey set himself a high mark to shoot at in producing a follow-up to "Going My Way," but none can deny that he reached that mark with high honors.

Dudley Nichols wrote the screen play. The cast includes Henry Travers, William Gargan, Ruth Donnelly, Joan Carroll, Rhys Williams, Una O'Connor, Martha Sleeper and many others.

### **"Snafu" with Robert Benchley, Vera Vague and Conrad Janis**

(Columbia, Nov. 22; time, 82 min.)

A moderately entertaining comedy-farce, of program grade. Based on the Broadway stage play of the same title, the story deals with the problems that beset an under-age veteran when he is returned home from the battlefronts by parental request. Occasionally it manages to be really funny, but for the most part the proceedings are tedious. The trouble with the story is that, for the sake of an occasional gag, opportunities to inject human interest have been sacrificed. Moreover, the farcical situations have been contrived in so ordinary a manner that the spectator loses interest in the outcome; he guesses in advance just what the next move of the players will be. The fact that the title stands for military slang of coded obscenity, known to many people, may prove to be a drawback at the box-office. Another possible drawback that should be considered is the fact that Robert Benchley, who plays one of the leading roles, died recently; some picture-goers may be sensitive about seeing him on the screen:—

Discovering that Conrad Janis, his fifteen-year-old run-away son, had falsified his age to join the army, Robert Benchley and Vera Vague effect his discharge. Conrad returns home a hero, but finds it difficult to adjust himself to family life, because of his parents' failure to recognize that he had grown into manhood. When Jimmy Lloyd, his overseas buddy arrives in town on a furlough, Conrad invites him to become a house guest. Nanette Parks, a journalism student at a nearby girls' school, visits the house to interview the boy hero, but she mistakes Jimmy for Conrad. Attracted to her, Jimmy poses as Conrad and, after spending the evening with her, trails her to her dormitory room to return a notebook she had forgotten. His presence in the dormitory starts a riot when the girls mistake him for a masher and compel him to flee. Conrad, unaware of Jimmy's experience, finds himself accused of being the soldier in the girls' dormitory. This charge, together with the failure of his parents to understand him, causes him to rebel; he runs off with Janis Wilson, his schoolgirl sweetheart, to be married. Benchley, already harrassed by Janis' hysterical aunt, and by the head matron of the girls' school, finds matters even more complicated when Marcia Mae Jones, an Australian girl, arrives to visit Conrad and announces that she was an expectant mother. Meanwhile Conrad, having changed his mind about marrying Janis, returns home. Everything is finally straightened out when Marcia explains that she was the bride of one of Conrad's buddies, and when Jimmy confesses that he, not Conrad, had visited the girls' dormitory.

Louis Solomon and Harold Buchman wrote the screen play, and Jack Moss produced and directed it. The cast includes Enid Markey and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

(Ed. Note: In one scene a Chesterfield cigarette advertisement on a magazine cover is displayed prominently.)

### **"A Game of Death" with John Loder, Edgar Barrier and Audrey Long**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 72 min.)

Originally produced by RKO in 1932 under the title of "The Most Dangerous Game," this remake, like the original, may give enjoyment to morbid people with sadistic instincts, but it may prove a bit too harrowing for average picture-goers. The story, which revolves around a maniacal hunter whose prey is human beings, instead of beasts, is different but hardly pleasurable. One gruesome scene is in the villain's trophy room, where heads of his victims are shown floating in jugs of water. It has considerable excitement and suspense, particularly in the closing scenes, where the villain chases the hero and heroine through the jungle swamps in an effort to kill them. It is a lurid tale, completely void of comedy relief:—

Washed ashore after the yacht on which he had been a guest is wrecked, John Loder, an author and big game hunter, finds himself on a lonely Caribbean island. He locates a castle occupied by Edgar Barrier, an ex-Prussian officer, his four servants, and a pack of savage dogs. Barrier invites Loder to stay in the castle, and, at dinner, he meets Audrey Long and her brother, Russell Wade, who, too, had been shipwrecked days previously. Warned by Audrey that there was something sinister about Barrier, Loder investigates and learns that Barrier, after causing ships to be wrecked by placing false signals on the water, gave refuge to the survivors. After entertaining them for a few days, he would order the survivors to leave the castle and try to escape from him. He then would hunt them down and kill them. Loder, aided by Audrey and her brother, plot to trap Barrier. But Barrier, learning of their scheme, imprisons Audrey and Loder, and chases her brother to his death. Loder, aware that he and Audrey would be the next victims, taunts Barrier into giving them a sporting chance for their lives. Barrier, priding himself as a sportsman, accepts. Loder outwits him and, after a terrible ordeal, kills Barrier and makes his escape with Audrey in a motor boat.

Norman Houston wrote the screen play, Herman Schlom produced it, and Robert Wise directed it. The cast includes Russell Hicks, Gene Stutenroth and others.

Not suitable for children.

### **"Vacation from Marriage" with Robert Donat and Deborah Kerr**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 94 min.)

Produced in Britain by MGM, this domestic comedy-drama is a delightfully pleasant entertainment. Depicting the changes wrought by the war in the lives of a prosaic married couple, who led a dull, unadventurous existence, the story is a skilful blend of comedy and drama, rich in human appeal. Most of the humor lies in the fact that, after three years of separation, during which each served in the British Navy, and each learned how to enjoy life, both dread the necessity of returning to one another to resume a monotonous married life, without realizing that the other's way of life was what each now desired. The scenes in which they first meet after the separation and come to the realization that the other's personality had changed completely are highly humorous. One's interest is held throughout, thanks to the engaging performances of Robert Donat and Deborah Kerr, as the principals. Although the story has a war background, it has little to do with the fighting:—

Donat, a timid office clerk, placidly married to Deborah, a drab, mild-mannered woman, joins the navy at the start of the war. Under the rigors of navy training, he becomes toughened physically, and world-wise mentally. At home, Deborah, tired of an idle life, becomes a Wren. The change from a humdrum existence has a decided effect on her; she blossoms out and soon discovers that she had been missing many pleasures, particularly when she becomes infatuated with a young naval architect. Meanwhile Donat, too, becomes eager for life when he falls in love with Ann Todd, his nurse, while recuperating from wounds in a North African hospital. After a separation of three years, Donat and Deborah each receive a ten-day furlough and both arrange to meet in their London apartment. Each felt morally obliged to return to the other, but the thought of resuming their dull married life was abhorrent to both. Deborah journeys to London accompanied by Glynis Johns, her Wren friend, while Donat takes with him Caven Watson, his buddy. Both tell their friends that they planned to ask for a divorce. Meeting for the first time, Deborah and Donat are delightfully shocked to see the change in one another, but inadvertent remarks made by their friends about what each said of the other leads them into a quarrel. Eventually, however, both become repentant, and the finish finds them in each other's arms.

Clemence Dane and Anthony Pelissier wrote the screen play, and Alexander Korda produced and directed it. The supporting cast is composed of English players.

Unobjectionable morally.



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1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1945

No. 49

### HARRY BRANDT'S AMBITION

Harry Brandt, of New York City and environs, besides owning a circuit of theatres, has one burning desire—to effect a new national exhibitor organization.

The November 23 issue of *Film Daily* reports that, two days previously, Mr. Brandt advocated such an organization, and expressed the hope that the December 5 meeting of theatremen in Washington, convened for the purpose of formulating a unit that will carry on some of the functions of the theatre division of the War Activities Committee, will serve as an opportunity for them to weld their interests.

In expressing his views, Mr. Brandt failed to make clear what kind of theatremen he had in mind when he said that these will have an opportunity to "weld their interests" at the Washington meeting.

Mr. Brandt knows, or at least ought to know, that there are two kinds of exhibitors: affiliated with producers and distributors, and not affiliated. He undoubtedly knows also that the interests of the two are not identical. The former, have no trouble obtaining the film they need, because of the interlocking interests of the different theatre-owning producer groups; the latter, are not in so fortunate a position, as he has undoubtedly learned, not only from experience, but also from the Government's suit against these groups to bring about a dissolution of their theatre operation activities.

Harry Brandt knows that there is a national organization consisting of independent theatremen—Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors. Why does he not join that organization? If he means what he says he will join this organization—or he should have joined it long ago.

It may be that he dislikes some of the Allied officers and some of the Allied policies, but the place where he can express his views most effectively is, not in the hallways, but on the floor of the meeting room whenever either the directors or the members at large hold a meeting. Since the organization is founded on democratic principles, it is the vote of the majority that determines both the leadership and the policies of Allied. Hence, if Brandt can prove that certain of the policies are wrong, they will be corrected; and if he dislikes the methods of certain of the officers, it is up to him to prove his point and they will undoubtedly be replaced.

How about it, Harry?

### STIFFENING BRITISH QUOTA MAY BE A BLESSING

In recent weeks some members of the British Parliament have demanded that the imports of American pictures to Great Britain be reduced by fifty per cent of what it is now, for two reasons: to cut down the amount of exchange, limiting it to about \$80,000,000 annually, and to compel the American theatres to show British pictures.

This paper could not criticize the members of the British Parliament if the proposal to reduce the imports of American pictures had been made as an economic measure. Unfortunately, however, Robert Boothby, M.P., who made the reduction demand, mixed in politics with his recommendation; he said that the American producers are out to exploit the screens of the world, and suggested that they be stopped.

Just how Mr. Boothby expects to stop the American producers from exploiting, as he believes, the screens of the world by reducing the number of pictures Great Britain imports from the United States is hard to understand. If anything, the efforts of the American producers to reach every theatre the world over will be accentuated by the loss of part of the revenue from Great Britain.

This paper has discussed repeatedly the inability of British pictures to reach the American screens in greater numbers, pointing out that the blame lies, neither on the American exhibitor, nor on the American public. Whenever a good British picture reaches the United States and, after a trial or two, attracts the picture-going public, the exhibitors rush to book it.

It may be true that some of the theatre-owning producers do not give the worthwhile British pictures the same attention they give, either to their own pictures, or to those of the other theatre-owning producers, but that does not mean that they are discriminating against British pictures, for they give the same treatment to the pictures of the non-theatre-owning American producers. Notice the complaints of some of the members of the Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers, which Society has as members such outstanding producers as David Selznick, David Loew, Eddie Small, Hunt Stromberg, Arnold Pressburger, Sol Lesser, Charles Rogers and others.

The British critics of the American exhibitors and producers seem unable to comprehend two facts: the

(Continued on last page)

### **"Frontier Gal" with Yvonne De Carlo and Rod Cameron**

(Universal, Dec. 21; time, 84 min.)

A pretty good "glorified" Western, in Technicolor. In spite of the fact that the story is ordinary, it should enjoy wide audience appeal, for it has plentiful rough-and-tumble action, comedy, some music, and a fiery romance. Some of the melodramatic situations are wildly imaginative, and the hectic, romantic by-play between Yvonne De Carlo and Rod Cameron is sometimes stretched to the limit of comic absurdity, but if one accepts the story for what it is he should find it entertaining. Miss De Carlo's acting shows improvement over her work in "Salome, Where She Danced," and, as in that picture, extra care has been taken to see that her physical attributes are shown off to good advantage. The surprise of the picture is five-year-old Beverly Simmons; she is a natural little actress, and her charm is captivating:—

Rod Cameron, a fugitive wanted for the shooting of his partner's slayer, rides into Red Horse Gulch in search of the assassin's accomplice. There he meets Yvonne, operator of a saloon. She misinterprets his attentions as a proposal of marriage and, when he tries to laugh it off, compels him at the point of a gun to marry her. Amused, he takes her forcibly to his ranch for a honeymoon, much to the chagrin of Sheldon Leonard, her discarded admirer. On the following day, however, the law catches up with Cameron, and he is sent to prison. Returning after a six-year term, Cameron finds that he has a five-year-old daughter (Beverly Simmons). Despite the coolness between Cameron and Yvonne, the little girl wins his affection and, when he sees her singing in the saloon, he wrests her away from Yvonne and takes her to his ranch. He sends for his former sweetheart, a schoolteacher, to give the child a woman's care. When Yvonne comes out to the ranch, Cameron tells her that he intended to marry the schoolteacher. She agrees to divorce him and to give up her daughter in the belief that the child would have a cultural advantage. Their agreement is frustrated, however, when Leonard, still angered at having been jilted, kidnaps Beverly. Cameron rides after him, while Yvonne rounds up the sheriff (Andy Devine) and a posse. After a hot pursuit, Cameron catches Leonard and in a desperate struggle throws him over a cliff to his death. He then rescues the child from a perilous perch on a log over a deep chasm. Their daughter saved, Cameron and Yvonne become reconciled.

Michael Fessier and Ernest Pagano wrote and produced the screen play, and Charles Lamont directed it. The cast includes Fuzzy Knight, Andrew Tombes and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"An Angel Comes to Brooklyn" with Kaye Dowd, Robert Duke and David Street**

(Republic, Nov. 27; time, 70 min.)

Republic presents this program musical as a "novel experiment in screen entertainment," because it combines the talents of a group of ambitious youngsters—all newcomers to the screen. For offering these young players an opportunity, Republic is deserving of commendation, unfortunately, however, it furnished them with a dull, slow-paced fantasy type story that strains for its laughs, with the result that the picture is tiresome on the whole. The song and dance sequences are plentiful and pleasing, and they are performed against fairly elaborate backgrounds, but they are not enough to hold one's interest. The players work pretty hard to put over the picture, but they are weighed down by the poor material.

The story opens in Actors' Heaven, where departed show people stood ready to help struggling young actors on the Earth. Learning that Kaye Dowd, an aspiring young actress, refused to be discouraged by producer Wilton Graff's refusal to employ her, the chief of Actors' Heaven assigns one of his angels, Charles Kemper, a former magician, to go to the Earth to help her. Kemper, concealing his

identity, becomes friendly with Kaye and with Robert Duke, a young artist in love with her, and he arranges with Graff to grant Kaye another audition. Graff, however, entranced by Kemper's feats of magic, rejects Kaye again, but tries to sign Kemper. Determined that Kaye should not lose courage, Kemper pretends to be a man of means and offers to produce a show if she and Duke would organize one. The youngsters, inspired, round up their stage-struck friends and dream up an elaborate musical show. Meanwhile Kemper seeks ways and means to interest Graff in their plans. David Street, an advertising writer, who loved Kaye but wanted her out of show business, determines to sabotage the plans. He succeeds by intercepting and concealing a message from Graff offering to grant the youngsters an audition. In the meantime Kemper had been recalled to Heaven for making a mess of Kaye's case. With Kemper's disappearance, Kaye loses heart, but Duke encourages her to put on the show anyway. Kemper, in Heaven, pleads for another chance to help Kaye. His plea granted, Kemper returns to the Earth where he exposes Street's perfidy and, after inspiring the youngsters with enough confidence to sell Graff the idea of backing the show, returns to Heaven vindicated.

Stanley Paley and Junc Carroll wrote the screen play, Leonard Stillman produced it, and Leslie Goodwins directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Masquerade in Mexico" with Dorothy Lamour and Arturo de Cordova**

(Paramount, Feb. 22; time, 96 min.)

Diverting entertainment for sophisticated audiences. There is nothing exciting, novel, or suspenseful about the farcical story, but it has been given such a lavish production, and the performances are so engaging, that one's interest is held, despite the obvious ending. Comedy is aroused throughout, most of which has to do with the predicaments Dorothy Lamour finds herself in when a young banker compels her to help him get rid of his wife's admirer, an amorous Mexican bull-fighter. Considerable laughter is provoked by the romantic antics of Arturo de Cordova, as the matador. The action, which takes place in Mexico City, has a gay Latin atmosphere, and it is interspersed with incidental music and dancing. Miss Lamour's clothes should make a hit with the women patrons. An outstanding comedy bit is provided by Mikhail Rasumny, in the small role of a music-loving Mexican cab driver:—

Dorothy, a New York chorus girl, is tricked by George Rigaud into flying to Mexico with a stolen diamond. Landing in Mexico City, Dorothy, to avoid a search by customs officials, slips the gem into the pocket of Patric Knowles, a wealthy banker and fellow passenger, who is arrested but subsequently freed. Dorothy breaks relations with Rigaud and, posing as a Spanish Countess, secures a singing engagement in a night-club. Knowles discovers her there and, under threat of exposing her, employs her to steal the affections of de Cordova, with whom his amorous wife (Ann Dvorak) had become infatuated. Dorothy becomes a guest at Knowles' home, where she captivates de Cordova to the annoyance of Ann. Meanwhile Dorothy and Knowles, without revealing their feelings, fall in love with each other. Complications set in when Rigaud, having learned of the scheme, arrives at Knowles' home and represents himself as the Count, Dorothy's husband. As a result, numerous farcical situations ensue until Dorothy, tired of it all, appeals to Knowles for relief. He helps her by paying Rigaud a huge sum of money to leave the country, and by suggesting that she marry de Cordova. The bullfighter, however, aware that Dorothy and Knowles loved each other, sees to it that each learns of the other's feelings. Knowles, delighted, declares his intention to obtain a divorce and to marry Dorothy.

Karl Tunberg wrote the screen play and produced it, and Mitchell Leisen directed it. The cast includes Natalie Schafer, Billy Daniels and others.

Adult entertainment.



### **"Miss Susie Slagle's" with Veronica Lake, Sonny Tufts and Lillian Gish**

(Paramount, Feb. 8; time, 88 min.)

Good wholesome entertainment; it has deep human appeal, dramatic situations, and a fair amount of comedy. The story, which revolves around a group of medical students residing in a boarding house operated by a gentle old lady, is episodic, but its warmth and simplicity will appeal to most picture-goers, for it will leave them with a pleasant feeling. Lillian Gish, as the landlady, is charming; the affection she shows for the students, and her efforts to help them overcome their problems, pleases one. There is not an unpleasant character; as a matter of fact, all are appealing. Two charming romances, one that ends tragically, are worked into the plot. The action takes place in 1910, and the settings of the period have been reproduced with care:—

Miss Gish, who maintained her boarding house for medical students only, most of whom were sons of eminent doctors who had lived with her during their student days, welcomes among her new guests Sonny Tufts, Lloyd Bridges, and Pat Phelan. Aided by Billy De Wolf, an upper classman, the boys work hard at their studies. Tufts was determined to become a surgeon, despite his psychological fear of seeing people die, the result of a tragedy he had witnessed as a boy. Romance enters into Tufts' life when he meets and falls in love with Joan Caulfield, daughter of Ray Collins, a staff doctor. Phelan, too, finds romance with Veronica Lake, a student nurse. When an epidemic of diphtheria sweeps the city, the students are drafted to handle other cases while the doctors combat the disease. Phelan becomes a victim of the disease, and his friends and Veronica take turns watching at his bedside. He dies during Tufts' watch. Feeling himself responsible, and convinced that he could never overcome the fear of death, Tufts refuses to handle cases assigned to him, and he decides to resign from the school. Miss Gish takes him in hand, and in a kindly, persuasive way induces him to attend a maternity case. He finds the prospective mother in a critical condition and loses his nerve, but Veronica, who was assisting him, gives him courage. He performs a delicate, emergency operation, saving both mother and baby. His obsession overcome, Tufts graduates from school with high honors, and looks forward to making Joan his wife.

Anne Froelick and Hugo Butler wrote the screen play from a novel by Augusta Tucker, John Houseman produced it, and John Berry directed it. The cast includes Bill Edwards, Roman Bohnen, Morris Carnovsky and others.

### **"Tokyo Rose" with Byron Barr, Osa Massen and Don Douglas**

(Paramount, March 8; time, 70 min.)

Because of its exploitable title, this program war melodrama offers opportunities for above-average business, but as entertainment it is quite ordinary. The story starts off in an interesting way by showing how some soldiers on the Pacific battlefronts were affected by the subtle propaganda broadcast by Japan's "Tokyo Rose," but it soon bogs down into a wholly unbelievable tale about an escaped American prisoner who, aided by the underground (Chinese and Koreans), succeeds in kidnapping "Rose" from a Tokyo radio station. The action is at times fast and exciting, but it is so far-fetched that only the most indiscriminating action fans will find it interesting. Lotus Long, who portrays "Tokyo Rose," takes little part in the action; she does not make an appearance until the final reel:—

Byron Barr and a group of fellow American prisoners are selected by the Japs to be interviewed on "Tokyo Rose's" program; by giving the prisoners good food and every courtesy, the Japs hoped to lull them into reporting favorably on their treatment. Barr, aware of the scheme, leads a revolt in the broadcasting station during an air raid and, after taking identification papers from a Swedish newspaperman killed in the bombing, manages to make his escape. He is given refuge by Don Douglas, correspondent of an Irish newspaper, and by Osa Massen, Douglas' sweet-

heart. Douglas puts Barr in touch with the underground, which arranges for him to be put aboard an American submarine scheduled to surface on the following night at a designated spot off the coast. Barr, whose hatred for "Tokyo Rose" was intense, determines to capture her before leaving Japan. He explains his daring plan to Keye Luke, an underground member, who agrees to join him. Wearing the dead correspondent's clothes, Barr, on the pretext of interviewing "Rose," gets into the radio studio and compels her to follow him out of the building. They are met by Osa, who, having found reason to suspect Douglas of informing the Japs of Barr's plan, had come to warn them. All jump into a waiting car only to find themselves pursued by a car-load of Jap soldiers. Barr wrecks the pursuing car with a hand grenade, and heads for the meeting place on the coast. There he and Osa are met by Douglas, who explains that he had been double-crossing the Japs so that Barr could get away with "Rose." Turning their prisoner over to the underground, Barr, Osa, and Douglas row to the safety of the waiting submarine.

Geoffrey Homes and Maxwell Shane wrote the screen play, and Lew Landers directed it. It is a Pine-Thomas production. The cast includes Richard Loo and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Road to Utopia" with Bing Crosby, Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour**

(Paramount, March 22; time, 90 min.)

Good mass entertainment. Like the previous "Road" pictures, in which Crosby, Hope, and Miss Lamour have been starred, this one is fast-moving and filled with many nonsensical but hilarious situations. In spite of the fact that it hasn't much of a story to tell, one's interest in the proceedings never lags, for the laughs come frequently, continuing to the end. Crosby and Hope, as two confidence men loose in Alaska during the Gold Rush days, are extremely funny; individually, or as a team, they get the most out of every gag and comedy situation. The picture pokes fun at itself throughout, beginning with a commentary by the late Robert Benchley, who tells the audience that it is an example of how a picture should not be made, and continuing with numerous other "kidding" gags, some of which include direct remarks to the audience by the players, as well as by animals that talk. The action is interspersed with several tuneful songs, sung by Crosby and by Miss Lamour:—

Learning that her father, discoverer of a gold mine, had been murdered by two Alaskan desperadoes, who had stolen the map of the mine, Dorothy Lamour determines to follow the pair to the Klondike to recover the map and to file claim to the mine. Meanwhile Crosby and Hope come to a parting of the ways when Hope insists that they go to Alaska in search of gold. Hope, however, tricks Crosby into accompanying him and, during the voyage, both become mixed up with the two thugs, steal the map, and assume their appearances to get off the ship. The townspeople, believing them to be the ruthless desperadoes, keep out of their way. Dorothy, under the same impression, starts romancing with both of them in an effort to recover the map. She also enlists the aid of Douglas Dumbrille, a crooked political boss, who pretends friendship for her as part of a plan to steal the map for himself. Hope and Crosby soon become the prey of, not only Dorothy, but also Dumbrille's henchmen, as well as the two desperadoes, who sought revenge. They head into the far north in search of the mine, closely pursued by the others, who overtake them in a snow storm. After numerous complications and adventures, during which both men play hide-and-seek with the villains, but find enough time to vie for Dorothy's hand, they elude their pursuers and turn the map over to Dorothy. Hope wins her for his wife, but twenty-five years later their grown son looks uncommonly like Crosby.

Norman Panama and Melvin Frank wrote the screen play, Paul Jones produced it, and Hal Walker directed it. The cast includes Hillary Brooke, Jack LaRue and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

British producers cannot make as good pictures for the American market, as can the American producers, and they have not attempted to exploit their stars in the United States so that the American public may know them and may go to see them regardless of the quality of the pictures in which they appear. As a rule, the American picture-goers prefer their favorite stars to the best pictures made. They go to see them even if the pictures in which they appear are not so good. The theory is that, when they go to see a picture in which their favorite star appears, it is just like visiting a friend. How can the British critics, then, expect the American picture-goers to patronize British pictures when they are not screen-acquainted with the players that take the principal parts in them?

We, in the United States, feel that British cloth is far superior to American cloth and, whenever we can obtain it, we have our clothes made of British material. Has any member of Congress demanded that a quota be set on the importation of British cloth unless the British people make one-half their clothes with cloth made in the United States? If any member of Congress should make such a recommendation, he would be laughed out of the Capitol building. And yet a member of the British Parliament has made such a recommendation!

### PRODUCING MOVING PICTURES IS NOT LIKE PLAYING BALL

"Convinced that more efficient methods could be used in production of pictures to eliminate much of the current waste," says a news item in the November 17 issue of *Motion Picture Herald*, "Dell Webb, principal stockholder of the New York Yankees baseball club, has become associated with Bing Crosby, Anne Nichols and Eddie Sutherland in the coming screen version of Miss Nichols' 'Abie's Irish Rose.' Mr. Webb is not a picture man, his entire experience with films being limited to investments in 'Knickerbocker Holiday' and 'The Great John L.' However, recent discussions with Mr. Crosby have caused him to study production methods and as a result he will be consulted on financial angles in the filming of 'Abie's Irish Rose.' He is reported to have first met Bing on a golf course and to have conducted many of the subsequent business talks with him in that informal atmosphere."

If Mr. Webb is to be consulted on how to raise money for Mr. Crosby for production purposes, perhaps his deserting baseball for picture production is a wise move, not only for himself, but also for Mr. Crosby, but if he is to tell the producer, the writer, or the director, how to cut down costs, this paper fears that Mr. Webb will find that retrenchment in picture making is far different from retrenchment in baseball.

Is he going to advise the writer how to finish his script much more quickly than heretofore? If so, he will have his hands full for, to begin with, either writing a story, or putting a story in script form, is not like putting one brick on top of another to form a wall. It is creative work, and requires inspiration, provided the writer has a creative imagination. To attempt to force the writer to create and thus finish his work sooner will avail nothing. If ideas do not come, they will not come by urging the writer to exert

greater efforts. As a matter of fact, the writer is more likely to tell Mr. Webb, when he is urged too much, to get some other writer to do his work.

Is he going to tell the producer how to get more work from his director, his cameraman, his grips, his actors? If that is his intention, he had better modify his views, for all these craftsmen are independent, and if pressure should be put upon them, they will no doubt lodge a complaint against Mr. Webb with their business agent. The matter is then taken up at the meeting of the union and, if the complaint is found justified, Mr. Webb will be told, either to desist, or the men will be pulled out.

The reduction of costs in production is a worthy objective, and has been dealt with in these columns frequently. However, before Mr. Webb can attain that objective, he will have to make a close study of the business so that his ideas of cost-cutting may not clash with the temperament of the creative artists.

### "Life with Blondie" with Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton

(Columbia, Dec. 13; time, 70 min.)

This is another one in the "Blondie" series, and is on about the same level as the other pictures; that is, a fair program domestic comedy, the sort that may amuse picture-goers who like plots that do not require them to think too hard. High class audiences will probably find the proceeding too inane. As in the previous pictures, Arthur Lake's troubles with his employer and with his budget form the basis for most of the comedy. In spite of the fact that the action is at times pretty silly, it is fast-moving and occasionally diverting. The closing scenes are exciting in a slapstick sort of way. One sequence contains a conspicuous advertisement for Gruen watches:—

Complications pile up in the "Bumstead" family when Daisy, their dog, is elected "Pin-up Pooch" of the Navy, and becomes famous overnight as a dog model. Conscience stricken because the dog's earnings were higher than his, Arthur Lake is unable to do his work properly and, as a result, Jonathan Hale, his employer, keeps harranguing him for a set of blue prints that had to be finished on a certain date in order that Francis Pierlot, a banker, grant the company a sizeable loan. The dog receives so much publicity that she finally comes to the attention of Veda Ann Borg, sweetheart of Douglas Fowley, a notorious gangster. Veda decides that she must have Daisy for her own. When Fowley's attempts to buy Daisy from Lake are unsuccessful, his henchmen kidnap the dog. Discovering that Daisy was missing, Penny Singleton, Lake's wife, telephones him at the office, just as he prepares to show the finished blue prints to the banker. Lake, excited, rushes out of the office, taking with him (not only the blue prints, but also the banker's brief case containing the check for the loan. His boss and the banker dash after him. A hectic chase ensues until the gangsters are finally located in a night-club, where Lake, assisted by his wife, his boss, the banker, and a group of sailors, subdue the crooks and bring Daisy home to her puppies.

Connie Lee wrote the screen play, and Abby Berlin directed it. The cast includes Larry Simms, Marjorie Kent, Ernest Truex, Marc Lawrence and others.

Unobjectionable morally.



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Published Weekly by  
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Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1945

No. 50

### THE UNAFFILIATED EXHIBITORS ARE DETERMINED TO REMAIN INDEPENDENT

This paper has for many years contended that an organization consisting of affiliated, as well as of unaffiliated exhibitors, can never work to the benefit of the unaffiliated exhibitors, first, because the interests of the two groups are in many respects conflicting, and secondly, because the affiliated members, by sheer weight of the number of theatres they represent, would dominate such an organization and would force their will on the minority.

For these reasons, HARRISON'S REPORTS is wholeheartedly in accord with the refusal of the Conference of Independent Exhibitors, an association consisting of twenty-one independent exhibitor organizations, to participate in the meeting of theatremen in Washington, on December 5, which meeting was called by the Theatre Division of the War Activities Committee for the purpose of forming a new national exhibitor association, the functions of which would be to carry on in peace-time the work that had been done by the WAC in war-time, such as making available theatre screens for the showing of Government-sponsored films, and representing all exhibition before Congress and other Government agencies in matters affecting exhibition interests.

Although the CIE has not officially declared itself as being opposed to the formation of this new association, the fact that none of its members participated in the meeting leaves no doubt as to its opposition. Moreover, its attitude is exemplified even more clearly in the following resolution, which the CIE adopted unanimously at its own meeting in Washington, two days prior to the meeting of the new association's sponsors:

"1. Throughout the war the independent exhibitors comprising the membership of the 21 associations included in this Conference, cooperating through the War Activities Committee of the Motion Picture Industry, gladly made their screens available to the Government in carrying to the public official messages, news and information pertaining to the conduct of the war.

"2. Holding that the preservation of a free screen is as important as safeguarding the freedom of the press, and recognizing that in peacetime the line between legitimate publicity and propaganda may be thin, we oppose any movement to set up special machinery within the motion picture industry to encourage such use of the screens, now that the war is over.

"3. Should any Government-sponsored motion picture of special importance and merit come to the attention of this Conference and of its constituent

associations, they will recommend the showing of such picture by their members; recognizing, however, the right of each exhibitor to adopt or reject such recommendation in the exercise of his discretion."

The CIE is to be commended for the forthright stand it has taken in insisting that each individual exhibitor retain the right either to show or not to show Government-sponsored films. Now that the war is over, we must recognize the fact that many people in this country, no longer motivated by the patriotic fervor of war-time, during which they willingly set aside their personal political beliefs, will once again begin to think and act in accordance with the political doctrines of the party they favor. There will be many who may from time to time disagree with some of the policies of the present administration, and it is understandable that some of them may look upon certain of the Government-sponsored films, depending on their subject matter, as an attempt by the administration in power to propagandize its policies.

While some of these Government films may be acceptable to the picture-goers in one community, they may be poison to picture-goers in another community. Consequently, a committee, the members of which will in all probability be unfamiliar with conditions in every community, should not be permitted to pledge the screens of the nation for the showing of Government films. The individual exhibitor must be permitted in each instance to decide for himself, for he, better than any one else, knows the wishes of his patrons.

Meanwhile, in spite of the fact that neither of the two national exhibitor organizations—CIE, which is representative of the greater majority of truly independent exhibitors, and MPTOA, which is producer controlled—has indicated a willingness to join them, the proponents of the new organization, with the approval of approximately 100 theatremen who attended the Washington meeting, are going ahead with plans for its establishment. Si Fabian has been elected temporary chairman, and he has been authorized to form a committee to assist him in arranging for a national convention to be called within the next three months for the election of officers and for the drafting of a constitution and by-laws.

Whether or not this new organization will ultimately come into being remains to be seen, but, assuming that it will, the lack of exhibitor unity in its sponsorship will prevent it from classifying itself as an organization that is representative of a unified exhibition front. As a matter of fact, since its adherents are comprised mostly of theatremen whose interests are either directly or indirectly connected with the theatre-owning producers, the organization would in effect be but

(Continued on last page)

**"Pillow of Death" with Lon Chaney and Brenda Joyce**

(Universal, Dec. 14; time, 66 min.)

Ordinary program fare. It may serve as a supporting feature in theatres whose audiences like chilling murder mystery stories, regardless of whether or not they make sense. Those who demand some semblance of logic in stories will be either amused or bored by the lack of it in this tale about a psychopathic murderer. The action is filled with mysterious happenings, aimed at directing suspicion on the different characters, and these should keep the followers of "chiller" melodramas in suspense. The usual eerie effects are employed, such as sliding doors, secret passages, sudden screams, and even the disappearance of the corpse, but none of these make much of an impression since the story itself is a muddled affair:—

When his wife is murdered mysteriously, Lon Chaney, admittedly in love with Brenda Joyce, his secretary, is accused of the murder by Clara Blandick, Brenda's aunt, and Rosalind Ivan, her cousin. The police arrest Chaney, but release him for lack of evidence. Chaney, seeking to prove his innocence, and to find his wife's murderer, finds reason to suspect J. Edward Bromberg, a fake spiritualist, with whom his wife had been friendly; Bernard Thomas, who, too, was in love with Brenda; and Clara and Rosalind, who disapproved of his love for Brenda. Chaney felt that each had a desire to see him behind bars to keep him away from Brenda. He broods over his predicament and experiences a nightmare in which he is haunted by his wife's voice accusing him of her murder. He follows the voice to the cemetery, where he finds his wife's body missing from the crypt. Meanwhile two more murders are committed; that of Clara, and of George Cleveland, Clara's elderly brother. Later, Chaney and Brenda discover his wife's body in the cellar of Clara's home, but Thomas admits that he had placed it there to frighten Chaney into a confession. Chaney, worried over Brenda's safety, decides to stand guard in her home. During the night, his wife's voice lures him to Cleveland's room and compels him to reenact the slaying of the old man. Brenda, awakened by Chaney's ravings, enters the room and soon realizes that he was a psychopathic murderer when he attempts to add her to his list of victims. The timely arrival of Thomas and the police save her from a violent death, and Chaney, heeding his wife's voice, plunges to his death through an open window.

George Bricker wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and Wallace Fox directed it.

Adult entertainment.

**"Captain Tugboat Annie" with Jane Darwell and Edgar Kennedy**

(Republic, Nov. 17; time, 70 min.)

This is the third time that the character "Tugboat Annie" has been filmed—first in 1933, by Metro, with Marie Dressler as the star, and then again in 1940, by Warners, with Marjorie Rambeau in the lead. This version by Republic is just a passable program comedy-drama, the sort that should find favor mostly with family audiences who are not too exacting in their

demands. Others will probably find the trite story developed in so obvious a fashion, and the comedy so forced, that they will become bored by the time the picture is half finished. There is a great deal of human interest in the story, but, because of its poor treatment, it does not affect one as it should. Jane Darwell, as "Tugboat Annie," is fairly good, but her performance lacks the warmth and appeal that the late Marie Dressler gave to the role. Except for a thrilling waterfront fire towards the end, the action is for the most part slow-moving. An outstanding highlight, which seems out of place in the picture, is ten-year-old Saundra Berkova's beautiful violin rendition of a classical piece:—

Known all along the waterfront for her ability, as well as her sharp tongue, Miss Darwell, a tugboat captain, foils an attempt by Edgar Kennedy, a rival seafarer, to get her job; a deep-rooted feud between the two had existed for many years. When Saundra, a waterfront orphan and gifted violinist, comes to visit her, Miss Darwell decides to adopt the child, but Joseph Crehan, her employer, induces her to let him care for Saundra so that he could finance her musical education. Her motherly instincts aroused, Miss Darwell takes steps to adopt another child, but through a misunderstanding she is given custody of Charles Gordon, a young veteran, who was on probation for beating a man who had swindled his deceased mother. Gordon, though resentful of any assistance, is obliged to work on Miss Darwell's tug while under her charge. His sullenness, however, wins him the ill will of Miss Darwell's loyal crew. Meanwhile Kennedy, unrelenting in his efforts to get Miss Darwell's position, empties her tug's fuel tanks and ruins her chance to obtain a lucrative towing contract for her employer. The crew suspects Gordon of the deed, despite Miss Darwell's faith in the boy, but Gordon clears himself by compelling Kennedy to admit responsibility. On the night that Saundra makes her debut as a concert violinist, the waterfront catches fire, and a flaming tanker loaded with octane gas endangers the city. Miss Darwell and her crew, risking their lives, tow the flaming tanker out to sea, where it explodes without damaging the city. As a result, her company wins the profitable towing contract.

George Callahan wrote the screen play, James S. Burkett produced it, and Phil Rosen directed it. The cast includes Manton Moreland, Pamela Blake, H. B. Warner, Fritz Feld and others.

**"Prison Ship" with Robert Lowery and Nina Foch**

(Columbia, Nov. 15; time, 61 min.)

This is another one of those minor program war melodramas, produced on an extremely modest budget, and handicapped by a mediocre story. From the viewpoint of indiscriminating action fans, one may find some merit in it, but those who are the least bit fussy about their entertainment will probably find it tiresome, for the heroic doings of the characters tax one's credulity to the bursting point. As can be expected in pictures of this type, Japanese atrocities are highlighted, but even these leave one unmoved since the story never strikes a realistic note:—



Included among the prisoners on a Japanese prison ship are Robert Lowery, an American, Barry Bernard, an Englishman, and Erik Rolf, a Dutchman. They are joined in their cell by a group of women prisoners, one of whom was Nina Foch, a British correspondent, who had disguised herself to hide her identity. Noticing that the ship traveled with lights ablaze, and that it was manned by a skeleton crew, the prisoners soon realize that it was a decoy for American submarines. To save themselves from being sunk, the prisoners evolve a plan to gain control of the ship. Lowery and Bernard stage a fake fight to attract the guard's attention, and Rolf kills the guard when he intervenes. Richard Loo, the captain, subdues the prisoners and shoots more than thirty of them in retaliation for the guard's murder. To save the others, Nina reveals her identity to the captain and offers to hand over to him photographic evidence of Japanese atrocities if he would stop the massacre of the remaining prisoners. Meanwhile Lowery, Bernard, and Rolf, succeed in escaping from their cell and in capturing control of the radio room. They manage to signal an American submarine before the Japs break down the door. In the fight that follows, Rolf and the captain are killed, while the other prisoners, at the cost of many lives, overpower the crew. The American submarine surfaces to torpedo the ship, but the prisoners save themselves by signalling with a make-shift flag of truce. Rescued, Lowery and Nina, who had fallen in love, look to the future.

Josef Mischel and Ben Markson wrote the screen play, Alexis Thurn-Taxis produced it, and Arthur Driefuss directed it. The cast includes Barbara Pepper and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Dick Tracy" with Morgan Conway and Anne Jeffreys**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 61 min.)

A fairly entertaining program grade action melodrama: Since the characters are based on the "Dick Tracy" cartoon strip, which is one of the most popular in the country, many people may be curious to see them on the screen. Consequently, the picture may draw better than average business, particularly with respect to the younger generation. The story itself is fantastic, but there is fast action and suspense throughout, brought about by the hero's efforts to capture a maniacal murderer. Occasionally the situations are wildly melodramatic, but these provide the kind of excitement action fans enjoy. It also has a sprinkling of comedy. Morgan Conway, as "Tracy," has a likeable personality, and is properly daring. It is apparent that RKO intends to make a series of these pictures:—

The stabbing of a schoolteacher on a lonely street starts Conway on the trail of the murderer. Among the dead woman's effects, Conway finds a threatening note that reveals the killer to be a man known as "Splitface" (Mike Mazurki). Conway soon discovers that other citizens, including the Mayor, had received threatening notes from "Splitface," but, before he can get around to interview them, two of them are murdered. His search for the killer leads Conway to the

home of Trevor Bardette, a demented professor of occult science, with whom "Splitface" seemed to have an alliance. Questioning the professor, Conway learns that "Splitface" has been convicted as a desperate killer years previously, and that he had vowed to kill the members of the jury that had found his guilty. "Splitface" commits a few more murders before the police net begins closing in on him. Desperate, he manages to kidnap Anne Jeffreys, Conway's sweetheart, with the idea of holding her as hostage until Conway promised to stop hunting him. But Mickey Kuhn, Conway's young adopted son, hitches on to the bumper of the kidnap car and sheds articles of his clothing along the route. Conway, following these clues, catches up with "Splitface" on an abandoned showboat. There, after a savage fight, he vanquishes the criminal and rescues Anne and his son.

Eric Taylor wrote the screen play, Herman Schlom produced it, and William Berke directed it. The cast includes Jane Greer, Joseph Crehan, Lyle Latell and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"The Red Dragon" with Sidney Toler**

(Monogram, no release date set; time, 64 min.)

Not much can be said for this latest in the "Charlie Chan" program detective series. The story is so far-fetched, and the direction and performances are so ordinary, that the spectator loses interest in the doings of the different characters. Moreover, the action is extremely slow-moving; most of the plot unfolds through excessive, tiresome dialogue. The comedy is too silly to be appreciated, and by the time "Chan" solves the mystery at the finish one's interest in the solution is gone. All in all, the picture is way below par for the series:—

When an attempt is made to steal Robert Emmett Keane's plans for a more perfect atomic bomb, Donald Taylor, Keane's assistant, telephones "Charlie Chan" (Sidney Toler) to come to Mexico City to protect the formula. By the time "Chan" arrives, Taylor is shot mysteriously during a luncheon at Keane's home, at which Barton Yarborough, Don Costello, Marjorie Hoshelle, George Meeker and Carol Hughes were present. Police Inspector Fortunio Bonanova authorizes "Chan" to investigate the murder, as well as the disappearance of the plans. "Chan" quickly discovers that those present at the murder represented different foreign interests, and that each sought to obtain the secret formula. He suspects them all, but during the investigation they are murdered one by one. "Chan" finds that the bullets that killed them were fired, not from a gun, but from a launching device set off by remote control. Eventually, after following numerous clues, "Chan," through his discovery of a bottle of Chinese ink, which leads him to a Chinese artist, learns that Taylor had painted the secret formula on an old typewriter ribbon to keep it out of the hands of the international spies. He discovers also that Yarborough had committed the murders.

George Callahan wrote the screen play, James S. Burkett produced it, and Phil Rosen directed it. The cast includes Benson Fong, Willie Best, Charles Trowbridge and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

another MPTOA. And there is certainly no need for such an organization. It can serve only as a means to keep in the limelight its proponents, the small clique that ruled the affairs of the WAC, and that usurped the powers of the different committees that made up the WAC.

The stand taken by the CIE has, of course, laid it open to considerable criticism on the part of the new association's proponents. Efforts are being made to disparage the CIE members by characterizing them as saboteurs of exhibitor unity. But the thinking independent exhibitors will not be swayed by such statements. Those of you who have been in the business for many years will recall that the producer-distributor interests had sought on a number of occasions to consolidate the independent exhibitor organizations with their controlled exhibitor units. The procedure has been to draw the independents into conferences, and then by sheer weight of numbers maneuver them to a point where they must either lose their identity as independents, or withdraw from the conference, thus subjecting themselves to the criticism of having "run out."

The leaders of the CIE are, in the opinion of this paper, fully aware of the pitfalls, not only in consolidating with the affiliated interests, but also in entering into organizational conferences with them. Their vigilance in seeking to maintain the truly independent status of their organizations is, therefore, fully justified.

### USE OF ORIGINAL PROPS DON'T MAKE A BAD STORY GOOD

According to a news release from its publicity department, Paramount is transporting three paneled rooms of the Vanderbilt mansion, which is on Fifth Avenue, New York City, to its studio in Hollywood, to be used in continental scenes.

The rooms consist of a dining room, a ballroom—the largest private ballroom in the country—and a bathroom.

The dining room and the bathroom are finished, says the release, in handcarved wood, designed and made in France. They will be used in Hal B. Wallis' "The Searching Wind."

Though nice sets impart to a picture dignity and importance, they do not have to be originals; studio-manufactured sets representing whatever sets the story calls for impart to such pictures as much dignity and importance as originals.

But even though the sets may be lavish and awe-inspiring, the picture can turn out poor unless the story is good.

If the Hollywood producers gave the story as much care as they give to the sets and to the introductory title of the picture, the quality of pictures would improve greatly.

### INTERESTING COMMENTS FROM AN AUSTRALIAN EXHIBITOR

The following is part of a letter that I received from an Australian exhibitor:

"Brother Harrison:

"Due to the influx of service men with money to spend, pictures have been running far beyond their usual time, with the result that the distributors have the idea that the long run is due to the excellence of their features, while it is really due to the fact that in

most cases the boys have nowhere else to go, and naturally make for a theatre to put in a few hours.

"Now that the war is over and we are losing our extra business, our big problem is to get our film hire back to pre-war levels, and believe me this takes some doing. Our business here has dropped 50%, but expenses are still up in the clouds. We did marvelous business during the war period, but the terrific taxes took most of the gilt off it, and whereas in normal time we could get material to repair seats, etc., this being an allowable deduction, we had all this extra wear and tear, but we'll have to wait until material is available for replacement, and this expense, with a sadly depleted income, is going to take some figuring out.

"Despite all shortages we keep the flag flying at Olympia. RCA managed to keep all gear in good condition, and let us have what they could. They also maintained a good service despite that fact that the Brisbane staff was three men short. Carbons, tubes and sprockets were the main difficulty, but by careful handling we managed O. K. Plenty of film, but due to the shortage of prints we were put back a bit in our releases. Pictures in two classes, good and not so good—nearly all the former have been jacked up into percentage class most of which we could have bought, before the war, as 'A' grade features (flat).

"Well I must not take up any more of your time, but would like to express my appreciation for what the U. S. A. has done for us here, and the way you treated our boys while they were over there completing their training in the air force. They all speak highly of their treatment.

"Best of luck and looking forward to having many more years of HARRISON'S REPORTS. . . ."

It seems as if the problems of the Australian exhibitors are not different from the problems of the American exhibitors, but the part of my friend's letter that deals with the efforts of the film companies to get for their films as much after the war as before is worth careful reading. You should make a careful reading also of the part of the letter that deals with the fact that replacements and repairs must be paid for during lean times.

As far as the sentiment of my friend towards the efforts of this country to help Australia, is concerned, it is evident that he represents a general sentiment.

### SENSIBLE PERU

According to a cable dispatch to the *Film Daily* from Lima, capital of Peru, the government of that country has appointed a commission, consisting of four government representatives and one representative of the motion picture industry there, to regulate the admission prices for each picture so that the public may pay for admission in accordance with its entertainment values.

That's common sense.

In this country, the theatres have been maintaining steady admission prices for all pictures, but when an outstanding picture comes along the distributors compel the exhibitors to increase their admission prices anywhere from two to four times as much as the regular prices, with the result that the public begins to gripe and criticize the local theatreman for such an increase. The picture patron often asks himself: "Why don't they reduce the prices on pictures that are a waste of time to see?"

Peru has given the answer.



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Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1945

No. 51

### BRIEFS FILED IN ANTI-TRUST CASE

As scheduled, the Department of Justice submitted its final brief on Saturday, December 15, in connection with the New York anti-trust trial.

The 125-page brief contends that the defendant-distributors have failed to disprove the Government's charge of anti-trust violations, and it asserts that the defendants' claim that theatre divorcement would be injurious to their operations without benefitting the public is a matter for Congress, and not for the Court, to determine.

The major portion of the brief concerns itself with factual statistics tending to substantiate the Government's charges of monopoly, while the remainder is devoted to legal argument, in which the Department of Justice cites the decisions in the Crescent, Schine and Goldman cases, as pertinent to the issues in the present case.

Another brief, as *amicus curia*, (friend of the court) was submitted to the Court last week by the Conference of Independent Exhibitors' Associations through Abram F. Myers, its general counsel, and Jesse L. Stern, associate counsel.

This brief, which is 42 pages long, is a profound document, characterized by a thorough, all-inclusive analysis, not only of the issues at stake, but also of their effect on the independent exhibitor. Mr. Myers tears into the arguments of the defendants, not by exaggerated statements, but by facts, figures, and logic. It should give the Court a crystal-clear understanding of how the independent exhibitors have fared and are faring under the present set-up of the motion picture industry.

Lack of space does not permit the reproduction of the many salient arguments and points Mr. Myers makes in the brief, but here in part is his closing statement, after citing the decisions in the Crescent and Schine cases:

"Dissolution being the fate that has been decreed for lesser circuits whose cases have been decided, it would be an astounding—a monstrous thing—if the great affiliated circuits, clothed with every competitive advantage and every special privilege that defendants can bestow upon them, should be allowed to remain in their hands, intact.

"And if the distributors conferred special favors on the circuits involved in those companion cases for reasons concerning which we can only speculate, they have and as long as they retain their interest therein will continue to have a compelling monetary motive for favoring their affiliated circuits as against the independent exhibitors.

"Great benefits will surely result from the entry of a final order embodying the proposals submitted by the Attorney General on August 7, 1945, re-inforced by the suggestions offered by the independent exhibitors.

"Divested of their theatre holdings the defendants will regard all exhibitors as customers and not as actual or potential competitors of their own or each other's theatres.

"Without a fixed first-run market they will compete with each other for playing time on the screens—compete as to price, terms, quality of product and service.

"The availability of first-run accounts on a competitive basis will attract additional producers and distributors into the business thereby ending the existing product shortage and making for healthier conditions for all concerned—the public most of all.

"Finally, appropriate injunctions against unfair, burdensome and monopolistic trade practices will prevent a recurrence of the evils dealt with in this brief as well as restoration of the monopoly. As said in the Crescent case, 'Civil suits under the Sherman Act would indeed be idle gestures if the injunction did not run against the continuance or resumption of the unlawful practice.'

"And those practices are not to be judged as separate, isolated acts—but as integral parts of the system by which the monopoly has been created and maintained."

### WHAT IS THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY'S REWARD FOR ITS COOPERATION?

Ted R. Gamble, national director of the War Finance Division of the U. S. Treasury, has requested the motion picture industry to continue the Victory Loan campaign to December 31 so that more Victory bonds may be sold.

There was no doubt in the mind of any one connected with the industry that the request would be heeded—the motion picture industry has always been ready and willing to aid the United States Government, either in war-time or in peace-time. The billions of dollars worth of bonds that were bought by the public in the different drives were sold through the leadership of the motion picture industry.

But what has the Government done to put the industry into a position where it could help the Government even more? Not a thing! Has it relieved the industry of the admission tax burden? No! Have the  
(Continued on last page)

HARRISON'S REPORTS extends to its subscribers and readers The Greetings of the Season



### **"Doll Face" with Vivian Blaine and Dennis O'Keefe**

(20th Century-Fox, February; time, 80 min.)

In spite of the fact that its backstage story is ordinary, "Doll Face" is a fairly good musical entertainment, offering enough comedy, dancing, tuneful songs, and love interest to satisfy most audiences. The story, which is based on the stage play, "The Naked Genius," written by Gypsy Rose Lee, revolves around a burlesque queen who aspires to become a musical comedy star. Neither the development of the plot, nor any of the situations, are particularly novel, but one's interest is held because of the engaging performances. The musical portion of the picture is very good. The production numbers are lavish and lively, and a few of the songs will undoubtedly become popular. The surprise of the picture is Martha Stewart, a newcomer; her singing and dancing talents are exceptionally good, and her personality is charming. Perry Como, who has become quite popular on the radio, "croons" a few numbers and takes part in the action. Carmen Miranda, too, is featured in the musical numbers as well as in the story:—

Vivian Blaine, a burlesque queen employed by Dennis O'Keefe, is turned down by Reed Hadley for a part in his Broadway show because she lacked "culture." O'Keefe, to whom Vivian was engaged, hits upon a plan to give her culture by having her write a book. He prevails upon Michael Dunne, a handsome, intellectual author, to "ghost" her autobiography. Dunne, attracted to Vivian, agrees, but his attentions to her rouse O'Keefe's jealousy. One day O'Keefe finds Vivian and Dunne in a compromising situation, and he accuses her of "two-timing" him. Though innocent of wrongdoing, Vivian breaks her engagement to him. When her autobiography is published, Vivian becomes famous and secures a part in Hadley's show. On opening night, O'Keefe, who had her under contract, obtains a court injunction to stop her appearance. Carmen Miranda, a mutual friend, takes matters in hand, and after much confusion it ends with O'Keefe and Vivian in each other's arms, and with O'Keefe owning a half-interest in the show in exchange for Vivian's contract.

Leonard Praskins wrote the screen play, Bryan Foy produced it, and Lewis Seiler directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Woman Who Came Back" with Nancy Kelly, John Loder and Otto Kruger**

(Republic, Dec. 13; time, 68 min.)

Those who enjoy mystery stories with psychological overtones should find this program melodrama to their liking, mainly because of the good production mountings and the capable direction and performances. The story itself, which deals with witchcraft and superstitious fear, is a rather muddled affair, replete with weird doings, but it has a good share of thrills, chills, and suspense. Nancy Kelly, as the heroine who believes that she is heritably bewitched, is effective. One feels sympathy for her because of her constant fear of evil inclinations within herself, and because of the ill will borne against her by the townspeople who believed her possessed of evil powers. There is a pleasant romance between Miss Kelly and John Loder; he, too, wins sympathy by his patience and courage in attempting to cure her:—

Returning by omnibus to her ancestral home in a New England village, Nancy is engaged in conversa-

tion by a weird old woman who claimed that, 300 years previously, she had been burned to death at the stake by Nancy's uncle for practicing witchery and sorcery. As Nancy feels the old woman cast an evil spell over her, the bus gets out of control and topples over a steep cliff into a river. Nancy, the only survivor among the passengers, manages to reach the village, where she informs Loder, her fiance and physician, of her experience. All the bodies are recovered except that of the old woman, whom Loder believes to be a figment of Nancy's imagination. Nancy, however, insists that she had seen the woman, and she soon becomes possessed with the idea that she was under the legendary curse of a witch. Loder and Otto Kruger, the village preacher, try to rid Nancy of her fear, but events seem to bear out her theory when things within her touch die. The townspeople soon begin to believe that she is a witch, and start a campaign to make her leave town. Fearing bodily harm, Nancy isolates herself in her home. Meanwhile Loder and Kruger discover an old document in the crypt of the village church showing that Nancy's uncle was a witch-burning fanatic, and proving that the legendary curse was false. They rush to her home to convey the good news, only to find the villagers stoning her. Nancy, frantic, heads for the river to end her life. Loder pursues her and thwarts her suicide attempt. In the meantime, Kruger discovers the body of the old woman amidst some shrubbery, and she is identified as an escaped inmate from a county institution. Convinced that her ailment was purely psychological, Nancy puts her mind at ease and looks forward to a happy life with Loder.

Dennis Cooper and Lee Willis wrote the screen play, and Walter Colmes produced and directed it. The cast includes Ruth Ford and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Hotel Reserve" with James Mason and Lucie Mannheim**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 79 min.)

This British-made espionage melodrama is of program grade, and it can be recommended only to the most ardent followers of this type of pictures, since the identities of the international spies are well concealed throughout most of the action; otherwise, it has little appeal for the average American audience. For one thing, the players neither are known here nor, with the exception of James Mason, do they give outstanding performances. Moreover, their thick British accent is at times difficult to understand. Still another handicap is the fact that the story is dated; the action takes place on the French Riviera in 1938, about a year before the war. Most of the action has a leisurely pace, but the closing scenes, where the spies are caught, are wildly melodramatic:—

Mason, an Austrian medical student seeking French citizenship, comes to a small Riviera hotel, where the guests were men and women of different nationalities, ostensibly vacationing. Mason, whose hobby was photography, finds himself arrested by the police when a roll of film from his camera, developed by a local merchant, turns out to contain photographs of new naval fortifications in Toulon. When the authorities threaten to deny him citizenship, Mason, unaware that they knew him to be innocent, and that they were merely trying to trick the real spy into betraying himself, offers to find out from among the hotel guests the one who had used his camera to take the photos. He sets clumsy traps, and is mysteriously attacked



and beaten. Eventually, he succeeds in uncovering the culprit only to find himself re-arrested. The spy escapes while Mason struggles vainly with the police. His arrest, however, proves to be a hoax by the police, who take him along in pursuit of the spy in the hope of trapping his confederates. After a wild chase over the roof tops of Toulon, in which Mason risks his life, he is instrumental in causing the spy's death and in rounding up the others.

John Davenport wrote the screen play from a novel by Eric Ambler. It was produced by Victor Hanbury, and directed by Lance Comfort and Max Greene. The cast includes Raymond Lovell, Julien Mitchell, Clare Hamilton and others. Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Adventure" with Clark Gable and Greer Garson**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 130 min.)

Fortified with the combined drawing power of Clark Gable and Greer Garson, "Adventure," a romantic melodrama, is sure to bring the masses to the theatres, and they will probably enjoy it because of the many emotional situations. But the story itself is antiquated and episodic, and at times too talky. Occasionally the different characters spout dialogue in which each expounds his own philosophy of life, but their meaningful words will probably remain vague to most spectators. Gable plays the part of a swaggering merchant-marine sailor, handy with his fists, and with a cynical outlook on life. It is a virile role, the sort his admirers will enjoy. Miss Garson, as a diminutive librarian who finds in Gable the adventuresome spirit she had been missing in life, is very effective, and always sympathetic. Though Gable displays tender characteristics, he is just fairly sympathetic; his constant cynicism begins to wear on one's nerves, and his easy way with women does not endear him to the audience. Some of the situations provide good comedy, while others, particularly the closing scenes, where Gable instills life into his still-born baby, are highly dramatic. The supporting cast, headed by Thomas Mitchell and Joan Blondell, is very good:—

Arriving in San Francisco after his ship had been torpedoed, Gable, to humor his friend, Mitchell, who had become convinced that he had lost his soul because he broke a pledge to lead a cleaner life, accompanies him to a library to obtain information on his state of mind. There Greer, the librarian, treats Mitchell sympathetically, but Gable scoffs at the philosophy presented by her books. While he argues with her, Joan Blondell, Greer's roommate, arrives. Joan, attracted to Gable, accepts his invitation to a night-club date but insists that Greer come along. At the club, Gable riles Greer by constant reference to her unworldly ways, and goads her into starting a free-for-all brawl. On the following day, he accompanies both girls to Greer's home in the country, where, after constant quarrels with Greer, both realize that they were in love. Greer, fascinated by his adventuresome spirit, agrees to an immediate marriage. After an idyllic three-day honeymoon, Gable announces his intention to go off to sea. Crushed, because she felt that their marriage would make him settle down, Greer, in keeping with his philosophy that both should feel free, decides to divorce him. Gable accepts her decision and sails away. His voyage is marked by a conflict with Mitchell, who accuses him of marrying Greer for a lark. Meanwhile Greer, expecting a baby, secures her divorce. When Gable returns, he learns

from Joan that Greer expected to give birth that day. He rushes to Greer's bedside and, after helping to bring his still-born baby to life, reunites with her.

Frederick Hazlitt Brennan and Vincent Lawrence wrote the screen play, Sam Zimbalist produced it, and Victor Fleming directed it. The cast includes Lina Romay, Tom Tully, John Qualen, Philip Merivale and others. Unobjectionable morally.

### **"Leave Her to Heaven" with Gene Tierney, Cornel Wilde and Jeanne Crain**

(20th Century-Fox, January; time, 110 min.)

This is a powerful dramatic entertainment. The story, which is based on Ben Ames Williams' best-selling novel, of the same title, concerns a beautiful woman whose viciousness effects many lives. It is not a cheerful entertainment—as a matter of fact, extremely sensitive persons may find some of the situations highly distasteful and even sickening; but audiences that seek originality in story, tastefulness in production values, and perfection in direction and acting, will find it fascinating. There is no doubt that it will be an outstanding box-office attraction, particularly in large cities. Gene Tierney, as the jealous wife, whose possessive love for her husband drives her to extremes, including murder and self-destruction, is a most unsympathetic character, but her portrayal is outstanding. Cornel Wilde, as the husband, gives an extraordinarily good performance; the spectator feels deeply the tragedy his selfish wife brings into his life. The entire supporting cast is fine. Not the least of the picture's assets is the superior Technicolor photography:—

Gene falls in love with Wilde when both visit the New Mexico ranch of a mutual friend. She breaks her engagement to Vincent Price, a Massachusetts attorney, and, employing her womanly wiles, rushes Wilde into marriage. Her love for him becomes so possessive that she determines that no one, not even Wilde's young crippled brother (Darryl Hickman), to whom he was devoted, shall invade their privacy. When the boy accompanies them to a Maine mountain resort, Gene, resentful, permits the lad to drown, making it appear like an accident. Wilde, despondent, keeps to himself. To renew his interest in her, Gene decides to have a baby. But, when she realizes that she would have to share Wilde with the child, she deliberately throws herself down a staircase, killing the unborn baby. Wilde, having grown suspicious of her actions, goads her into confessing both murders. He leaves her, but Gene, determined that no one else shall have him, particularly Jeanne Crain, her adopted sister, of whom Wilde was fond, concocts a plan: she kills herself by placing arsenic in her sugar, but before dying arranges circumstantial evidence indicating that Jeanne, in league with Wilde, had "murdered" her. Jeanne is indicted, and during the trial Vincent Price, Gene's discarded lover, now prosecuting attorney, convinces all of her guilt until Wilde takes the stand and reveals that Gene had murdered both his baby and brother, and states that she had killed herself in a way that was designed to hold him from the grave. Jeanne is acquitted, but Wilde is given a two-year sentence for concealing evidence from the state. Released from jail, Wilde rejoins Jeanne to start life anew.

Jo Swerling wrote the screen play, William A. Bacher produced it, and John M. Stahl directed it. The cast includes Ray Collins, Mary Philips, and others. Adult entertainment.



politicians ceased attacking it? No! As a matter of fact, there are in Congress members who would cheer if the industry were put out of business, for they consider it something evil.

The industry leaders could make some request for the help they give to the Government. They could, for example, request that Congress reduce the tax from the present twenty per cent rate to ten per cent, if not to remove it altogether. And justifiedly so, for without the aid the industry has rendered to the Government not one-half the bonds would have been sold, no matter how much publicity the newspapers and the radio would have given to the different loan drives.

The elimination of the tax would not have hurt the Government at all, for more people would have been attracted to the theatres and, as a result, more bonds would have been sold, and the increase in patronage would have resulted in so great an increase in revenue that the elimination of the admission tax would have been offset by the increased taxes paid by the corporations that own the theatres as well as by the individuals.

Si Fabian tried to organize the exhibitors into one national organization. He failed.

HARRISON'S REPORTS does not question his motives in this article—perhaps he meant well. But did he make it known to the Government officials that one of the aims of such an organization, the purpose of which would be to help the Government, would be the elimination of the twenty per cent admissions tax? Had he made this aim the proposed organization's slogan, perhaps his failure would have turned into a tremendous success.

The independent exhibitors must abandon the hope that the producers and distributors will aid them in their fight for the elimination of the admission tax. If they hope to have the tax repealed, they must do the persuading of Congress themselves. If the recent gathering of exhibitors in Washington had been held for the purpose of pleading with Congress for the elimination of the tax, the meeting would have, as said, been a tremendous success. But it turned out to be a failure because its proponents chased rainbows.

### **MORE FEATURES ARE NEEDED**

"Longer runs and fewer features," says the December 10 issue of *Daily Variety*, "has been the trend among first-run theatres in Los Angeles the past year. . . ."

The trend towards fewer pictures annually has been on for some time. There was a time way back when more than eight hundred pictures were produced. Since that time the number has been growing smaller and smaller each year, until now it has come down to about three hundred pictures.

While there is some prospect that the number will increase, now that the war is over and that more manpower and materials will become available, it is doubtful whether this increase will be appreciable, for it takes more skilled manpower to produce a picture nowadays than it took to produce it in the past.

Only a few years ago it was not uncommon for a company to deliver fifty or more pictures during a season. The same companies cannot produce that number now, for they are not able to find skillful writers, producer, directors and mechanics in sufficient numbers.

Let us assume, however, that the companies will manage to produce more pictures for the coming seasons. The question the exhibitor is asking is this: Will the companies increase their deliveries, or will they follow their present policy of forced extended runs in affiliated theatres, which result, not only in an artificial product shortage because of the large number of pictures that are held up awaiting their turn, but also in "milking" the pictures dry before they reach the subsequent-run theatre?

Unless the producer-distributors change their ways, the double-featuring exhibitors are going to find it more difficult each year to obtain enough products for their needs. Three hundred features a year, or approximately six features each week, can supply a double-featuring exhibitor with three changes a week. But how about his competitors? Where will they get their product from? The result will be that they will either establish a single-feature policy, or bid so high for product to take it away from a competitor that they will be operating their theatres with little profit, if not at a loss.

Perhaps the importation of British pictures will, after all, be a blessing for the small exhibitors. They will at least have some first-run films to show in their theatres.

Here is an opportunity for the British producers to capture a substantial portion of the American exhibition market. But will they make the most of this opportunity? It will all depend on whether they abandon the British habit of unfolding a picture's action leisurely, adopting the American methods, (where the action in small pictures is full of blood and thunder), and making their stars known to the American public through adequate publicity.

### **GANGSTER FILMS THE EASIEST TO PRODUCE—BUT—**

The movement against gangster pictures is gaining momentum. It was started by the city of Minneapolis, which determined to see to it that no gangster films are shown in that city, and now both Milwaukee and Columbus have announced similar intentions. And if these three cities are successful, other cities will undoubtedly take up the movement.

Although this paper has never believed and does not believe now that there should be censorship over films any more than there should be censorship over either newspapers or radio, if censorship should be established over gangster films the producers should blame no one but themselves; for when they are up against it for story material the head of the studio invariably gives to his story department orders to slap together a gangster "quickie," because they believe that such films always sell.

Let the producers make no mistake about it; when a censorship movement starts and gains headway, it is hard for any one to confine it to one type of film—it is bound to spread. They cannot put up a strong fight against the gangster-film censorship, because there is no question that the cheap "quickies" they put out just to take care of the release schedule are doing the industry no good. What they need to do is to give orders to their story departments to avoid gangster stories. Unless they do, they are going to have grief; they may find their shelves loaded down with dozens of this type of pictures and no place in which to show them.



# HARRISON'S REPORTS

## Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States .....	\$15.00
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Canada .....	16.50
Mexico, Cuba, Spain.....	16.50
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35c a Copy	

1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

New York 20, N. Y.

A Motion Picture Reviewing Service  
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial  
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

Published Weekly by  
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,  
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

Established July 1, 1919

Circle 7-4622

## A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXVII

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1945

No. 52

### A PUNISHMENT THE INDUSTRY DOES NOT DESERVE

Agitation for either taxing admissions to motion picture theatres or establishing censorship boards is spreading nation-wide. According to a report in a recent issue of *Motion Picture Herald*, city and state tax measures are appearing in growing numbers in state legislatures and among municipal governing bodies.

The chief motive for these measures is either a desire to provide funds that will in some way aid returning war veterans, or a determination to stop the showing of, what some people call, demoralizing pictures.

In respect to the desire of some legislators to provide funds for returning veterans, the idea is worthy, but one is prompted to ask: Why should the motion picture industry be singled out for special tax legislation? Why should it be made the goat?

In respect to the censorship measures, one may state that the picture industry has always been attacked by either politicians, who wanted to please certain classes of voters, or by well-meaning but misinformed people, or by busybodies.

It is not sufficient that we condemn such measures; we must do something to put an end to this sniping at the motion picture industry.

To fight the battle against the tax-plotters as well as the crack-pot reformers successfully, the industry must organize a strategy committee that will prepare defense plans. Such a committee must be supplied with the best publicity experts that are obtainable to write the material to be used in an effective campaign.

Thus, when an exhibitor reports that there had begun in his city or state agitation for either taxing the admissions or establishing a censorship board, there will be ready material, which can be used instantly. The committee could then dispatch a fighting crew to the city or state in question to carry on the work of combatting the hostile forces. The public should be told, in cases of tax measures, that it would foot the bill, and, in cases of a censorship board, that the reformers plan to do the thinking for the community.

Certainly the individual exhibitor is not in a position to organize a fighting crew of this kind, but he may be counted on to cooperate to the fullest extent.

The industry made a great mistake by not resorting to institutional advertising in newspapers, magazines, and on the radio, to tell the public of the important part it played, and the sacrifices it made, towards

winning the war. Had it resorted to such advertising, it would now have little difficulty in obtaining public support to fight discriminatory moves against the industry. But nothing is to be gained by continuing the mistake.

The time for constructive action is at hand. All that is needed is unselfish leadership to formulate a program and start a campaign, not for the benefit of some one group, but for the benefit of a great institution in American life—the motion picture industry.

### SHOULD MOTION PICTURES BECOME A PROPAGANDA MEDIUM?

Speaking at the fifth annual Nobel prize anniversary dinner in New York on December 9, Harry M. Warner, president of Warner Brothers, stated with great eloquence and feeling that the American motion picture can function as a great instrument in creating international peace and good will. "Motion pictures can show the people of every nation," said Mr. Warner, "how much their own welfare is dependent on the scientific, cultural and industrial achievements of the other nations. They can dramatize the fundamentals of the world today. . . ."

Just how is Mr. Warner going to achieve his aim? Is he going to order his writers to write stories the main object of which will be to teach the people of the world the benefits of peace and good will? If he should do that, where is he going to show such pictures? He certainly does not plan to saddle the American exhibitors with pictures that will reek with propaganda. They have had one experience—a sad one—with a picture of this type, which was produced by Warner brothers—"Mission to Moscow." It was a box-office flop, in spite of the fact that its mission was to bring about a better understanding between the United States and Russia.

It is understandable that a person with high aims, such as Harry Warner has, should be influenced by the set-up of the evening. Mr. Warner was speaking to an audience that believed fully as he believed—to work for peace and good will among the nations of the world. But when one leaves the "footlights" and judges the question coolly, he cannot help but come to the conclusion that what Harry M. Warner proposed and aimed at is unattainable. People go to the theatres to be entertained, and not to be filled with deliberate propaganda.

(Continued on last page)

**"Portrait of Maria"  
with Dolores Del Rio**

(MGM International, no release date set;  
time, 77 min.)

This is a Mexican-made production, with dubbed-in English dialogue for American exhibition. Its appeal in this country will probably be limited to high class audiences, for the story is much too slow for the masses. From a technical viewpoint, the picture stands up well as compared with Hollywood standards; the photography, particularly the outdoor scenes, is superlative, and the direction and acting is competent. The dubbing-in of the English language has been synchronized with the lip movements of the players to a remarkable degree. The story is a tragic, touching tale about an unhappy Indian girl, who, because of her mother's sinful past, is made to suffer many humiliations and is eventually stoned to death by the people of her primitive community. Dolores Del Rio, the only member of the cast known to American audiences, gives a sensitive portrayal of the tragic heroine. It is a sad entertainment, but beautifully done:—

Living on the outskirts of the village, because of the resentment the villagers felt for her, Dolores dreams of the day when she can marry Pedro Armendariz, a poor but kindly young Indian. Both planned to wed as soon as Dolores' small debt to Miguel Inclan, a ruthless village overlord, was paid. Inclan, desirous of Dolores herself, jealously demands that she pay him with a young pig, which she had been raising to provide funds for her marriage. The village priest intercedes and saves the pig, but later Inclan shoots it. When Dolores becomes dangerously ill with malaria, Pedro is compelled to break his way into Inclan's general store to secure Government quinine, which Inclan had denied to them. He takes also a wedding dress for Dolores. On the day of their marriage, Pedro is arrested and jailed for the theft. Dolores, in an effort to earn money for Pedro's release, consents to pose for an artist. When the artist finishes her face, he asks Dolores to disrobe so that he could complete the portrait. Horrified, she flees, and the artist, to finish the work, arranges for another model to pose for the body. When the finished portrait comes to the attention of the villagers, they assume that, like her mother, Dolores was sinful. Enraged, they hunt down the unhappy girl and stone her to death.

Mauricio Magdaleno and Emilio Fernandez wrote the screen play, and Mr. Fernandez directed it. Films Mundiales produced it.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Fear" with Peter Cookson  
and Warren William**

(Monogram, no release date set; time, 68 min.)

Except for a contrived trick ending, which may disappoint and even displease some picture-goers, this psychological murder melodrama is a fairly good program picture of its type. Revolving around the frustration of a poor but brilliant medical student, who resorts to murder to finance a discontinued scholarship, the story arouses one's interest from the start, and it is filled with many suspenseful situations. The ending, however, where it is revealed that what happened had been a dream, gives the spectator a sharp letdown, as well as a feeling that he had been cheated, for it had not been established that the student had

fallen asleep. Obviously, this trick ending is an imitation of the one used in "Woman of the Window," but unlike that picture the device is disappointing instead of surprising. Otherwise the picture has many praiseworthy assets, such as good direction and acting:—

Learning that his scholarship had been discontinued, Peter Cookson becomes despondent because of his inability to finance his medical education. To avoid eviction by his landlady, he pawns a watch with Francis Pierlot, a professor who aided financially embarrassed students. A discussion by student friends of the "gyp" tactics employed by the professor, as well as of the large amount of cash he kept in his apartment, impels Cookson to murder him to obtain funds for his tuition. Before he can rob the man, however, Cookson is frightened away. With no actual clues to work on, but through Cookson's watch found among the professor's effects, police captain Warren William suspects Cookson of the crime. Lacking evidence, however, he does not arrest the young man but has him followed constantly by Nestor Paiva, his aide. William's psychological methods, and Paiva's constant presence, eventually wear down Cookson's resistance, and he finally confesses the crime to Anne Gwynne, a waitress, with whom he was in love. Anne urges him to give himself up, but Cookson decides to leave town. At the bus station, he is astonished to learn from newspaper headlines that another man had confessed to the murder. In his haste to return to Anne, he is hit accidentally by a car. The scene shifts back to Cookson's apartment, where it is shown that he had been having a nightmare.

Alfred Zeisler and Dennis Cooper wrote the screen play, Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Mr. Zeisler directed it. The cast includes Almira Sessions and others.

Adult entertainment.

**"Out of the Depths"  
with Jim Bannon and Ross Hunter**

(Columbia, Dec. 27; time, 61 min.)

A minor program war melodrama, produced cheaply. Most audiences will find it tiresome, not only because the story is far-fetched and uninteresting, but also because it lacks the usual quality of excitement and suspense generally found in pictures of this type. For one thing, there is too much talk and too little movement; most of the action is confined to a few sets representing the interior of a submarine. There is some attempt at excitement towards the finish, where the submarine sinks a Jap aircraft carrier, but the miniature work in these scenes is so amateurish that one loses interest in the battle. Although the picture's running time is only one hour, considerable padding has been resorted to in order to stretch it to that length. It has an all-male cast:—

Setting out for an unknown destination until sealed orders are opened, Jim Bannon, captain of an American submarine, learns that he was to head for Fusan, Korea, to pick up an American intelligence officer. En route, the submarine learns of the Jap surrender. Shortly afterwards, Bannon intercepts a Jap convoy, only to be attacked by it, despite the surrender terms. Bannon takes his ship to the Korea coast, where he rescues the intelligence officer after a minor battle with Jap soldiers. The intelligence officer informs Bannon of a secret Jap plan to attack the U.S.S.



Missouri with Kamikaze planes during the signing of the surrender papers. To frustrate the plan, Bannon determines to sink the aircraft carrier from which the attack was to be launched. He locates the carrier, but is attacked savagely by its planes. In the ensuing battle, the submarine is damaged heavily, and its one remaining torpedo sticks in its tube. With Bannon and most of the crew dead, Robert Williams, the submarine's first officer, orders the remaining crew members to abandon ship, but stays on himself to guide the vessel into a headlong crash with the carrier. His heroic action sinks the carrier, saving the Missouri from possible harm. Weeks later, Williams and the surviving crew members are awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Martin Berkely and Ted Thomas wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and D. Ross Lederman directed it. The cast includes Loren Tindall, Robert Scott, Frank Sully and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"One Way to Love" with Willard Parker, Marguerite Chapman, Chester Morris and Janis Carter**

(Columbia, Dec. 20; time, 83 min.)

Just fair. It will do as a program feature in theatres whose audiences are not too demanding about their screen fare. It is a breezy, nonsensical type of comedy, which, lacking a substantial story, depends on its comedy situations and farcical mixups for its laughs. Some of these manage to be amusing, but most of them are so forced and so inane that they fall flat. There is not one outstanding situation in the picture, and since it is a farce there is no human interest nor do the characters do anything to arouse sympathy. Nearly all the action unfolds on a train, but it moves along at a fairly steady pace. The production values are modest:—

Chester Morris and Willard Parker, a radio writing team, part when Marguerite Chapman, Parker's fiancée, insists that he go to work for her father. Offered a \$1,000 a week contract by Nu-Youth products to write a new radio show, Morris, who was lost without his partner, determines to get Parker back in the fold. With the aid of Janis Carter, his girl-friend, Morris succeeds in breaking Parker's engagement to Marguerite, and tricks him into joining Janis and himself on a trip to Los Angeles. Through a strange coincidence, Marguerite boards the same train. She becomes reconciled with Parker only to quarrel with him again when he inadvertently tries to share a compartment with a strange woman. In retaliation, she becomes friendly with Jerome Cowan, a fellow passenger, who represents himself as the president of Nu-Youth products. Parker patches up his quarrel with Marguerite, and in the process insults Cowan. Morris, realizing that Parker's action had put them out of a job, becomes chummy with Hugh Herbert, an eccentric passenger, who claimed to be a multi-millionaire. Both Morris and Parker are delighted when Herbert offers them a contract at double the salary Cowan had been willing to pay them, but their joy turns to gloom when two detectives, searching for an escaped lunatic who imagined himself wealthy, board the train and arrest Herbert. Morris and Parker quickly make amends to Cowan, who accepts their apology. But, when they arrive at the Los Angeles depot, they soon discover that Cowan, not Herbert,

was the lunatic. Herbert, released, decides to return east immediately. The two writers, trailed by their girl-friends, follow him aboard the train in an effort to reinstate themselves in his good graces.

Joseph Hoffman and Jack Henley wrote the screen play, Burt Kelly produced it, and Ray Enright directed it. The cast includes Roscoe Karns, Irving Bacon and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"The Sailor Takes a Wife" with Robert Walker and June Allyson**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 91 min.)

A fairly good domestic comedy-farce, revolving around newlyweds. Some of the situations are so funny that the audience will laugh uproariously. There are spots in between that are a little draggy, and the story is lightweight, but there is enough comedy throughout to hold one's interest fairly well. Most of it is brought about by the daily misunderstandings that occur between the young couple, resulting in one or the other finding cause for not consummating the marriage. Both June Allyson and Robert Walker, as the honeymooners, are likeable and sympathetic characters; one realizes that, despite their quarrels, they loved each other sincerely. Audrey Totter provokes many laughs in her broad characterization of an exotic, flirtatious Roumanian neighbor, as does Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, as an apartment house janitor. On the whole it is a pleasant entertainment:—

Six hours after they meet in a canteen, Walker, a sailor, and June, a stenographer, marry. Walker returns to his base, hoping that he will secure a pass for the next weekend so that they could have their honeymoon. Meanwhile June, with the reluctant aid of her employer, Hume Cronyn, who loved her, finds a cheap, run-down apartment. On the following weekend, Walker shows up with a medical discharge. Their first night together ends in a quarrel when Walker, amused by June's old-fashioned pajamas, laughs at her. Angered, she locks herself in the bedroom. On the following day, while June is away at work, Walker makes the acquaintance of Audrey, a neighbor, who offers to get him a job with Reginald Owen, her elderly "boy friend." Walker, to make an impression, invites Audrey and Owen to dinner. The party turns into a fiasco when Walker accidentally spills a plate of food over Owen. While Owen goes home to change clothes, Audrey tricks Walker into coming to her apartment. She sends him home drunk and covered with lipstick. June, furious, locks herself in the bedroom once again. On the following day, June's birthday, Walker buys her a black lace nightgown, hoping to win her forgiveness. Meanwhile Cronyn, having learned of the young couple's quarrel, sends June a mink coat in an attempt to win her back. Both gifts arrive just as the newlyweds become reconciled. The mink coat precipitates a new clash between them, and, after a number of incidents in which the actions of both Cronyn and Audrey serve to further provoke their jealousy, the honeymooners become reconciled for good.

Chester Erskine, Anne Morrison Chapin, and Whitfield Cook wrote the screen play, Edwin H. Knopf produced it, and Richard Whorf directed it.

Not for children because of a few suggestive situations.

It would be different if Mr. Warner intended to show such pictures in Warner Bros. theatres exclusively. But such is undoubtedly not the case—he meant that every theatre, throughout the world as well as in these United States, should show them.

Assuming that he meant that and nothing else, did he consult a substantial part of the independent exhibitors to learn whether they would approve the type of propaganda pictures he had in mind?

The producers would do well to leave propaganda to be spread by the printed word; let them not arrogate to themselves the right to use as propaganda a medium that, by its nature, is intended to entertain people—the people who pay their money at the box-offices of the theatres for the purpose of buying a two-hour entertainment.

Let the motion picture continue its natural role—that of entertaining people.

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### **“WELL DONE, MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY”!**

At a ceremony held early this month in Washington, D.C., attended by Government dignitaries and motion picture executives, the industry was presented with a beautiful plaque, inscribed, “Well Done, Motion Picture Industry,” as an expression of appreciation by the Government for the industry’s outstanding war effort. The plaque is signed by Robert Patterson, Secretary of War, James Forrestal, Secretary of the Navy, and Fred M. Vinson, Secretary of the Treasury.

If the motion picture industry could gain some material reward to the accompaniment of this honor, it would be a worthy recognition of the sustained efforts, and the vast sums of money, that it contributed towards the winning of the war. Unfortunately it cannot.

If, in conjunction with the beautiful plaque, the industry were given a substantial reduction in the burdensome admissions tax, by at least having it put back to ten per cent, where it was before the war, it would have given those connected with the industry great joy.

The motion picture industry contributed toward the winning of the war more than either the press or the radio, or even both combined; and whereas no one dares snipe at either of these information as well as entertainment mediums, the motion picture industry has received and is receiving blows by such demagogues as Rankin, of Mississippi, and others. Among other things, it is being even accused of having proved traitorous to the nation—communicating information to the enemy through its films.

When is the industry going to demand real recognition—the recognition that it deserves? Reduction of taxes, not merely the presentation of plaques, is what it deserves.

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### **A STRANGE SIGHT TO INDEPENDENT EXHIBITORS**

Lately, the independent theatre owners have become witnesses to a strange phenomenon—major companies fighting large circuit theatre operators.

First, it was Universal: Unable to obtain satisfactory terms for its film from the Griffith Theatre Circuit, which has theatres in Texas, New Mexico, Missouri, Oklahoma and Nevada, it started a campaign of setting up opposition theatres in locations where the Griffith circuit owns theatres by offering its product to any one who would build a theatre, and guaranteeing that its product would be available to the new theatre so long as its owner should want to have it. That is an honest-to-goodness fight.

Now it is Twentieth Century-Fox: according to the trade papers, this company has shut off its product from the Brandt circuit and is in some situations selling to competitive theatre, because its sales executives are unable to obtain from Harry Brandt satisfactory terms.

What the outcome of these fights will be is not difficult to guess: the circuits will lose out.

If the fight were between a major company and an independent exhibitor who owns a small number of theatres, the situation might be different—a major company could hardly afford to enter into a battle with a small exhibitor.

It is true that Famous Players Lasky, the old company, did resort to such tactics, as the Federal Trade Commission brought out early in the 1920’s; but the conditions today are different; with so many court decisions against the majors, it is doubtful whether any of them would dare resort to the tactics now employed against the big independent circuits.

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### **A SENSIBLE DECISION**

Following the lead of the Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana, which early in November passed a resolution calling for the abandonment of collections in theatres, the Independent Theatre Owners of Washington, Northern Idaho and Alaska, at its meeting early this month, adopted a similar resolution to discontinue all collections in the theatres of its members.

Like the ATO of Indiana, this exhibitor organization recognizes that, during the war emergency, the exhibitors were obligated to use their screens and theatres to publicize and to make collections for the different worthy causes, but it now believes that, with the end of hostilities, the obligation has ceased to exist.

The move made by both these exhibitor organizations is a wise one. Most patrons resent it when some one shoves a contribution basket before him and asks him to contribute towards some cause he either knows nothing about or does not believe in. Some times a patron is made to feel embarrassed because he just does not happen to have handy some small change. At other times, some patrons who visit either one theatre that has three changes a week, or a few theatres during the week of a particular collection drive, find themselves asked to contribute to the same fund several times. The result is that many picture-goers are discouraged from going to picture shows. The important point, however, is that patrons go to a theatre to be entertained and not to be imposed upon.

Other exhibitor organizations should and undoubtedly will adopt similar resolutions.



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